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THE SOUL OF YOUR CHILD

THE SOUL OF YOUR CHILD

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TO
MY LOVING MOTHER
AND
TO THE MOTHER OF MY CHILDREN

FOREWORD

I SHOULD not have written this book unless I had been asked to do so by the publisher. For I have seen too many young people grow up under my care to have any great personal desire to write about the education of children. What I have written here is dedicated rather to the protection of the young than to their education. It has never been my aim to educate children ; on the contrary, I can never look at any little human being without sympathy, for I am afraid someone will educate it. This book therefore is intended not for educationists, but for those who are willing and able to be educated and to educate themselves. Thus it is for some parents only, the smaller number doubtless. But I should be happy if the little volume might fall into the hands of those who wish to be parents in the days to come.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. THE CHILD IN RELATION TO NATURE . . .	13
The Soul of Your Child	13
When The Child is Coming	16
When The Child Has Come	20
How Many Children Should There Be . . .	25
II. THE CHILD AND ITS PARENTS	31
Who Your Children Are	31
The Natural History of Education . . .	36
The Aim and Object of The Care of Children	40
The Right Way of Training	46
Parents' Duties	55
What Parents Ought Not to Do	61
III. THE CHILD AND PHYSICAL CARE	65
Life-Circles in Childhood	65
Before He Finds His Feet	69
When Your Child Can Walk and Talk . .	75
The Secret of Sex	82
Sick Children	89
IV. THE CHILD AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD. . . .	95
Why Children Are Here	95
Play	100
Life in The Family	107
Life Outside The Home	112
Freedom	119

	PAGE
V. THE CHILD AND KNOWLEDGE	124
When Shall We Begin	124
School and Home	127
School and Obedience	133
The Choice of A Calling in Life	138
VI. THE CHILD AND RELIGION	144
What Is Religion?	144
Ideas of God	148
Religion as a Means of Education	154
True Fellowship	161
Children as Teachers	167
EPILOGUE	175

The Soul of Your Child

I

THE CHILD IN RELATION TO NATURE

"The best education is none."

THE SOUL OF YOUR CHILD.

A "CHILD." A sacred name indeed, and one not to be lightly tossed aside, the name of the sweetest—even if the most responsible—gift that this life has to offer. Who are you, my reader, that you dare to name a child as yours and yours alone? Are you fitted to bear this burden, or do you over-estimate your powers? Do you realise the work to which you are called? Do you know the path you yourself are seeking to follow?

Yours it is to open the gates of sentient life to an immortal soul, to be his faithful guide and protector, to make every sacrifice that you may be his strong shield and buckler at all times, even when your proffered help may be despised or resented.

Is your love strong enough never to fail, but, enduring all things, ready to find its most sacred and blessed fulfilment in self-sacrifice for the spirit that has entered into flesh?

A task, so stupendous, might well prove beyond our strength, but for the fact that we too are no less spiritual beings in whose nature lies the power to carry out the duties we assume. In this we find the parents' dignity and chief joy. Life has never anything better to offer us than the anxiety, the toil, the weight of care and all the happiness, that our children bring with them as they come.

A child is the only possession which death does not call upon us to leave behind. All else is lost; fame even fades or changes with the changing views of ages yet to come. All that remains is that, as parents, we helped children into mortal life. If we live on, they live on too; they also belong to eternity beyond the reach of fleeting time.

Do you then find your greatest joy and deepest care, your heaviest burden and your chief delight in—your child and his soul?

Let us have a plain and simple talk about this, not from any scientific point of view as to the soul, but as those who have a practical knowledge of life and a practical end in view. Your child is a spiritual being, an ego, beyond our perfect understanding or explanation. Yet you understand him as far as is needful, for your child is of your own being.

This spiritual nature of your child's you can never change, for it has and follows its own laws. All you can do is to watch in humble admiration its mysterious workings, as you catch faint glimpses, maybe, of a world infinitely deep and wide.

Just as you view with different eyes the little star you now inhabit when you look at the starry firmament above, and learn the vast distances lying

THE CHILD IN RELATION TO NATURE 15

before you, so it may be that your child's spirit may awaken in you a sense for the infinite and eternal.

Your child is a spirit, but he has body and soul as well.

His body you know—a little ; it is the object of your watchful care, yet of its underlying principles you are ignorant. Science strives to learn them, but it, too, notes that the farther knowledge goes, the more involved the road. But we are not discussing science, and for practical purposes you know enough.

The care of his soul—an even more difficult task—is laid upon you as well. Body and soul are closely bound together, and we must needs make some mention of his body when we talk of the soul of your child.

Still, we must be quite definite as to what we mean by the term soul if we are to understand one another, for the word has more than one significance, and is used in many varying senses.

Here, we mean by soul the emotional side of your child's nature. We must therefore speak of the relationship between children and parents, and of the whole range of religion, of science as well ; in short, every side of the spiritual life, in so far as it is passing and connected with man's life here, is the province of the soul.

Hence in the soul we find the source of all that human development which is bounded by earthly time-limits and subject to visible changes.

The soul's relation to the spirit is that of a planet to the universe, for there is cosmic life no less than planetary life.

As a general rule cosmic speed, cosmic space

is beyond our comprehension, but our conceptions of earthly distances, human values and human growth are clear enough.

So do not worry about your child's spirit. It will follow its own laws, which we neither can nor need to understand, since the spirit stands above all time. But, instead, pay heed to his soul, and that too with all diligence, for the soul is the source of all growth for this life, the one thing you can educate. The treatment you give your child, or that life metes out to him, leaves indelible marks on his emotional nature, on his soul.

Here the question arises whether your child will grow up your friend or your accuser, and another even more important, whether you will give of your best and bring to a successful issue the one masterpiece of your life that is, in very deed and without reservation, worthy of all your strength.

You have a high calling. Rejoice in it.

WHEN THE CHILD IS COMING.

If bearing children or being born was a matter under State control, no one would have them who was not able to produce a certificate, attested by seals and signatures, of his fitness to feed and educate them. Such a certificate of course would only be obtainable by means of training and examinations.

In the same way no child could be allowed to be born without examinations. At the very least, it must be instructed in life's weightiest problems and be able to show some understanding of them, so that its instruction would be enforced by the State.

THE CHILD IN RELATION TO NATURE 17

Life, however, is the hardest of all problems. Not a single human being exists but has had times when he despaired of finding any solution, and vast numbers have succumbed to such despair. It would take a lifetime to learn how to live.

But, in reality, everything is quite otherwise, for nothing takes us so unawares as life itself. It requires at least thirteen or fourteen years of study to get the right to indite baptismal certificates, to seal unimportant deeds, etc. ; many years of instruction are needed as a preliminary to a confession of faith ; great preparation is wanted for any trade.

Life alone has to be undertaken without a moment's consideration.

Why is that so? Because reproduction is a natural process, and Nature in her confident simplicity looks upon that as the most healthy of all conditions.

See what sorts and conditions become fathers and mothers! People, often with no wish for parenthood, with no knowledge of what is happening to them, and who, as a rule, have not an inkling of the tremendous import of their gigantic task.

Nature lays children on our knees in those years when we lack every kind of experience or mental maturity ; when, however, we have acquired these by hard toil she withholds that sweetest of riddles, to whose solution we would have dedicated all our powers.

Those who long for children—often with the keenest of desire—those who can offer the most favourable conditions for their care and tendance are, as a rule, denied the boon. It often seems

as if the longing for children destroyed the power of having them.

But when we do not want to have children because we fancy that we have something more important to do, that we have neither means nor strength to educate them, then the little strangers come close on the heels of one another and settle down in our home with the greatest assurance and ease, and never a thought as to our pleasure and convenience.

Is all this but chance, or does it hide some deeper purpose? Is this one of the thoughts that are higher as the heavens are higher than the earth?

Evidently all that we call education, teaching, instruction, is something very small and unimportant, often something not quite without its drawbacks, and Nature holds us in her strong arms with a smiling, "You can't fall out just yet!" whilst she follows out her own great scheme of education. As far as we have at last learnt to see, this scheme is development, and the attitude by which we shall best approach it is one of trusting, happy confidence.

This, therefore, is our first lesson as we stand in silent astonishment before the children and have to take a second place with all our educational schemes, when we see how children come, powerless to do aught but stand by, look and adore.

Yes, look! And so spin the first threads that unite you to your child and his soul.

And no sooner do you know that a little child is coming to you, than you must fix your whole soul on the new life and let all other thoughts pass unheeded. As far as may be, forget the outside

THE CHILD IN RELATION TO NATURE 19

world, with its conventions and ideas, and concentrate on the world within and the new life beginning there. In silence look and look again.

Yet one thing more : open wide the doors of your soul to love and joy.

Nature works with us in strange mysterious ways. All new life is to her a most momentous happening, and for its protection she has made hidden and far-reaching preparations. It would carry us too far afield to speak of these in detail here, but one must be mentioned, one that touches you mothers nearly.

It is seldom that a human being is really quite healthy. This is a fact, and perhaps must be so, but Nature intends every new life to enter the world as healthy as possible, and is generally successful in her effort.

Hence all the discomfort, all the suffering is piled upon the mother, and heedless of her weal or woe, the whole burden is laid upon her, to secure for her little one comfort and well-being. Thus childbirth is called "recovery" in the significant speech of the German peasant, a recovery for the mother from much suffering that she has borne instead of her babe. Nature knows that she may expect much from a mother ; no burden is beyond her.

But in her days of stress for the sake of her child, the mother has to fulfil the demand made upon her to keep joy in her heart, and to banish, to the utmost of her power, the gloomy thoughts that are so natural a consequence of her state of health and the conditions of her life at that time. For the more vital her thoughts are then, the easier she will make life for the child she is bearing.

What is neglected at this time can never afterwards be made good. Who can say whether the reason of many a morose life is not to be found in the time before the child's eyes were opened to the light of day?

Fill your hearts then, mothers, with love and joy for the sake of your child's soul, and keep your inner liberty and peace as an offering to the new spirit for whom you are opening the gates of life.

WHEN THE CHILD HAS COME.

The room for the mother and her babe should be filled with quiet happiness, sacred and serious, a place of pure love and greatest joy, a place free from every discordant note.

No untested visitor should be trusted to enter there. Make sure of a reliable, kind doctor—there is no lack of such, thank Heaven. A quiet, careful nurse, heart and soul in her work, should look after mother and child, but out with gossiping old hags who defile all childbirth with superstition or bad jokes, and settle themselves down in repulsive familiarity.

Modern times have fortunately brought about improvement in this, for nowhere is the care of body and soul so intimately connected as at childbirth.

* * * * *

The child's first cry is of vital importance in human life. For the first time the air-passages are filled, and for the first time, too, there is movement in the human lungs, those wonderful bellows that are able to keep on working unceasingly day and night, year in, year out for full

a hundred years. The little heart has long been beating, but the lungs never expand until they do so in that first cry. No wonder then that it is a matter of moment whether the first breath is of pure life-giving or impure death-dealing air.

It is extremely important that the lungs should expand to their widest extent and make a good beginning in their arduous work. If they meet with impure air the passages open with reluctant hesitation, as though setting up some involuntary barrier, and this imperfect use brings weakness in its train. Be glad if your child raises a lusty scream. That is desire for life, not temper; satisfy his desire to the best of your power.

Nature offers you for nothing the only food, vitally necessary for the first few days—fresh air in abundance. You injure your child in body and soul if you do not use it as freely as it is offered, *this food that comes from no druggist or apothecary, but pure and unadulterated from mother Nature herself.*

Many children take their first draught of poison with their first cry, and so the foundations are laid of some permanent defect. To deprive the body of full breaths of pure air is to cripple the soul. Yet many have no idea of the importance of the first cry.

See to it that your child comes into this world by an open window and opens his air-passages in as pure an atmosphere as may be; insist all through those early days on a continual supply of pure fresh air, and, later on, the child will see to it for himself and scream with all his might until air is given him.

Under no circumstances must this—his first bed-

room—be turned into a washhouse or drying-loft—under none whatever.

We were once forced by change of residence and much absence from home to engage a nurse for our child, the first to offer herself in a strange place, for no other would come to such a distance with us.

She was old, and dirtier than we had any idea of. As long as the child shared her room it screamed day and night without ceasing. But when we took it to our room, by the open window, its cries ceased, and it slept peacefully the night through in the life-giving air. The nurse we did not keep.

As far as practicable, children should have young persons about them ; they should certainly not sleep with old people. They come to young mothers, and though, indeed, young, growing life may be good for old age, sere age is not good for youth. Nature shows the path very plainly and trusts no more children to the old.

* * * * *

Until the third day, the best food is fresh air ; then a new source of life, no less important, begins its spontaneous flow.

There is much in common between milk and blood, and blood is the life-stream. You mothers can share your very soul with your children, and are happy and indescribably honoured in being permitted to nourish them with your very self. Never again in life will you be able to have such union of body and soul with your children. Can you refuse it? Do you really prefer to commission the apothecary or some manufacturer to get your

children's first food, rather than to give them the best you have to give, the life-giving stream from your own bosom?

Would you rather turn over the sullied pages of the weekly paper to find some food for your darling than offer him his mother's breast?

Find out from your doctor how important it is for your own health to suckle your child. Make him tell you the absolute truth, and consider most conscientiously whether it is advisable and necessary to relinquish coldly this most precious mother's right. And what this natural food is to your child and his soul, learn from the people's speech if your own heart does not tell you.

"He sucked it in with his mother's milk," says popular wisdom, when speaking of some mental quality.

Nor is it strange if this be true, for the mother, feeding her child, gives him part of her own life, and life is by no means simply the movement of material atoms, but an unveiling of much deeper things. You pour upon your child of all that is best and most sacred within you.

See how it lies in your arms, helpless indeed, yet fearless in its sure and boundless confidence. Perhaps no one quite trusts you, and with reason. Yet you feel sore at this want of confidence.

But your child trusts you, utterly and entirely ; moreover—though we do not talk of that—your Maker trusts you too, and has brought you your child in His outstretched hand of Nature. He trusts you because you are of the human race, and lie as helpless in His arms as your babe does in yours.

It is marvellous how unbounded confidence

brings man's best side to light. Many bad people are quite good parents. And why? Because they have not the heart to shatter such confidence. As soon as we are capable of appraising them at their right value they reveal the evil in them, but so long as the child's confidence is theirs they rise to it. Were not then the helpless children much more right in their judgment?

The child's natural defence is love. But this is awakened by the bestowal of confidence. What a high value must be set upon mortals since the most sacred and important link in the chain of development is entrusted to their hands. Even the wildest beasts of prey, the most depraved of men are conquered and brought into the service of the coming generation by no other means than unbounded trust and confidence.

A mother that suckles her child weaves a special bond of affection whose threads encircle her soul and his. Who can tell how much this helps to put the mother in that special place which none but she can fill?

Have you really the heart to withhold your best from your child? But if you are not able to give what you should and would, then in double humility offer your best to win your child and his soul.

* * * * *

There are three things that Nature freely offers to every human child, and these three therefore we must not lightly withhold.

The first is fresh air ; the second is its natural food, the only food that costs nothing. Everything else that grows and flourishes on this earth is already private property, bespoken, rented out,

THE CHILD IN RELATION TO NATURE 25

or for sale ; (the mother's milk alone is a stream without price. Yet it is to be feared that as the result of disuse by self-indulgent mothers, even this stream may become in time less copious.

The third free gift is water. From the first moment keep your child as clean as ever possible ; soon he will take such joy in cleanliness that he will learn to avoid all want of it himself, and this too has great mental effects. The care of the soul begins with the care of the new-born body.

HOW MANY CHILDREN SHOULD THERE BE?

Many people cannot bring up one, not to speak of several.

Many people? Who indeed would say that he can bring up children? If there were any such people, then too there must sometime be a perfect human being as the result of education. But there never is.

We have the best methods of education and the most elaborate books about them, but all that results, as we know indeed, is just—the average. Nothing more.

I was once acquainted with a Professor of Education who had written many books on the subject, and given courses of lectures to students. He died long since, but I cannot give his name, for his fame still lasts.

He had an only son, whom he brought up as an example and test of his method of education. We were fellow-students. He was a dear, good fellow, with only one defect that made him useless for this world, and that was—his education. That

he never achieved anything was due to it, and to it alone.

One thing we may all note, that those who want to bring their children up into something out of the ordinary fail as a rule. Of this I could give many sad examples.

'Nature means to keep education in her own hands. All we can do is to allow the growth of what she, in her wisdom, has implanted and so to protect her seed, that it has chance to fulfil its destined growth.

Thus it is never good that there should be only one child, for only children are generally over-educated, which in their case means mis-educated.

Our peasants' speech used to say : " One child is no child," and they were right. At any rate, one child is a great source of anxiety.

And it is a hard matter to educate two children, for then there is the danger that the father may favour one, the mother the other, especially if they are of different sexes, and favouritism in education is often enough destructive of all family life.

The fewer the children, the more danger of this hurtful favouritism. It is too easy to keep watch over them, and they are constantly with their parents, who are thus tempted to interfere in matters that should and can only be left to Nature.

At the very least there should be three. Every married couple owes that to humanity, for the young generation must certainly be at least one more than the old, or else there is no progress.

'But the three must represent both sexes. Something is wanting where there are only boys ; the absence of the feminine element is always a drawback, and one that becomes more marked as time

goes on. It is one of Nature's laws that the sexes shall get used to one another from their earliest years.

The difference between them, however, increases with increasing culture. On a lower plane the sexes are much alike; their bodily powers are similar, nor is there great dissimilarity in the occupations of their adult life.

But it is otherwise when culture comes. Life amongst educated people makes sharper and sharper sex-distinctions, both physical and mental. The whole mentality of the educated girl is perceptibly different from that of the educated boy. And the differentiation of the whole bodily habit becomes more marked, as well as their work in life.

Yet if there are only daughters then there is a felt want indeed.

The poor girls never get a right idea of the other sex if they grow up without a brother, and at the time of the most pronounced difference between the sexes the growing girls conceive the most romantic notions of man, conceptions that usually end in the most bitter disappointments.

And again it is a disadvantage to be the one representative of the opposite sex in a family of three; the poor child is generally over-indulged, spoilt, and looked upon as something extraordinary.

So then there ought to be—four—always provided that there are two brothers and two sisters to pair off together, for here it would be much more dreadful if the sexes stood in the proportion of three to one.

But best of all, of course, would be five—both sexes having their due representatives. Then there is a proper family, and, after all, there is nothing

finer in the world than life in not too small a family.

But their educational training! Thank Heaven, it has, in such case, to go to the wall. The parents' care has to flit from one to another and cannot concentrate on individuals.

The youngest always demands most care and attention, and, meantime, the elder members succeed in developing their own life under the general protection extended to them. Perhaps ten years pass—at least we will hope so—before the five children have all learnt to walk, and by then the eldest is growing fast, and, as he grows, learning to look after the weakest member of the family. Splendid training that, but provided by Nature, not by you!

And if the full half-dozen comes, what a joy for great and small!

But the cost of schooling! You are right; we had almost forgotten that. The children must all, if possible, be educated, and naturally that costs money.

The Tatars had a clever proverb; they are an uneducated people, but the wisdom of the unlearned is often the wisdom of Nature, the wisdom of God.

They used to say: "Where a head comes there is a cap to cover it." Well, then, let us say: Where a head comes there is something to fill it.

It is a well-founded human experience that those children turn out best whose parents have had a hard struggle to bring them up. Those who achieve the most are not, as a rule, the only children of rich people, but those who, in their childhood, had to share their parents' money

anxieties. But is it possible to give real parents' care to so many? There might indeed be seven, or even more.

To that I answer, "yes." Only never imagine that their training rests in your hands only. Your children educate each other much better than you can do. They devote a more constant eye to it, for their attention is not distracted by the various cares and complexities of life; they show greater justice too, for no one has such feeling for truth as a child, and—they are more severe. But of that we will talk later on.

Youth is severe, whilst age grows ever less so, and hence the natural law that only youth can train youth. Before you have seven or more children you will be nearly forty. And then you^t will be growing very lenient and very fit to put a restraining hand on any too great severity.

So that parents, who desire to train well, should see that there are plenty of children. Many who have few children have worried over the training, and used up all their vital powers in such anxieties, so that there could not be a large family. But those who have many follow where Nature leads.

It is no easy matter, that I know. We had nine but still regret that there was not one more. Yet those who cannot sacrifice their lives for children are not worthy to have any.

But keep free of worries, or, at least, of all that are unnecessary. They eat away your life and deprive your children of what is dearest and most needful, of their parents and their own joyous freedom from care.

Take courage, for the world has many paths

to offer, and some inconspicuous way, overlooked by others, will open here and there to your little flock.

I was once summoned to a dying peasant—well, not a peasant, but a poor cottager. Nor did he die, which was a good thing. For, suddenly pointing to a cradle beside his bed, he said: "Now that's my twenty-first, but I'm as pleased with it as if it was my first."

Then I felt ashamed of all the worries that often tried to overwhelm me, and many a time afterwards his words came back to my memory.

II

THE CHILD AND ITS PARENTS

Parents who learn nothing from their children can teach them nothing.

WHO YOUR CHILDREN ARE.

IF I could only know who my children are. I do not know them. That is, in many points I know them very well. I know their virtues and their faults and can plainly discern many of their strong and weak points. I can fairly well judge their capacity as regards this world, and their future development will throw a light on much more. But there is still something that I do not know, a secret that defies discovery.

This turns on the questions: What are we for them? In what relation does the child stand to its father and mother? Are we their creators who brought them forth at our command when we—often all unwitting and unwilling—gave them entrance into this existence of ours; if, therefore, these wondrous beings are our chance creation, who then are we? Or is it our children who push their way to us and through us on to this planet, and were they already what we now are—free and independent spirits? Is there no one who feels tongue-tied at these questions when he sees the child's nature develop in all its wondrous delicacy?

Well, since none can answer these questions,

none can fully explain who our children are, and father, mother, son and daughter remain words fraught with mystery ; the only one thing we know—over which we may ponder—is that deep, solemn secrets lie hidden here.

But what do we really know? The one thing we know with absolute certainty is that our children are spirits no less conscious of freedom than we ourselves, differing only in this, that they entered this world a little later than we, say twenty or thirty years, a time so short as to be scarcely worth mentioning.

This short space of time, however, enables us to help them to find their footing here, so that, later on, they may lead their own lives in free and individual independence.

We cannot, then, look upon them as "our" children, in the sense of being one of our personal possessions ; they do not belong to us but, first and foremost, to themselves.

The right we have over our children is neither more nor less than our duty to give them every help to live their own lives in the greatest possible independence. When we made life in this world possible for them, we tacitly undertook to preserve it and to smooth its path as far as lay in our power.

The highest aim in all our care of children, then is so to handle them that they may become our comrades and friends. If, for any reason or other they should chance to be unwilling, then we must acquiesce as well, for love, if it is to be unfeigned must be a free and unforced gift. And we, who give affection, must leave those we love perfectly free to requite it or not as they will. All we have to do is to hold ourselves ready for their love.

As a rule the children will wish to be ours, for we it is who have opened the gates for them, and they came to our bosom with a confidence so unbounded, that it has conquered even evil men and turned them into loving parents.

I think my experience does not err when I say that children's love and confidence endure until we make their longer continuance an impossibility.

So, if you have children, never turn aside from your aim to win their unfeigned friendship. This rich reward makes up for any sacrifice demanded of you in your care of them. Its foundation, however, can only be laid in the days of their frank, unconscious artlessness, i.e. in childhood. The parent who only tries to win his children's friendship after they have come to years of discretion has, by his delay, lost all hope of success.

The years are few indeed in which we can rule them as we will; very soon they become our critics, know us through and through, and pass upon us a judgment no less severe than just.

It always grieves me to the heart to hear children forced to make excuses for their parents, and to notice how many imperfections they would hide with their childish love; to know that fathers and mothers compel them to pity where they should only be conscious of happy gratitude.

The whole sum of human misery lies hidden under the inscription: "Children and parents," all human misery and the greatest human splendour lie there in close companionship.

* * * * *

One other thing we know for certain. It is common knowledge that all that happens on this

planet, and probably in the whole universe, is in accordance with the law of progress. A deep mystery lies hidden in the law itself, but its effects we have begun to see plainly.

Parents and children, therefore, come under this law, hence children are in the more favoured position ; their advantage over us is certainly but very minute, a mere matter of tens of years in a development that is measured by thousands and again thousands ; yet an advantage it is.

Parents must show their art in pointing out this advantage and in making use of it.

Here we meet with conditions of considerable compensation, for whilst the children have the advantage in development, the parents are ahead of them in maturity and experience. This produces a nicely balanced measure of equality, which fairly well excludes any sense of inferiority.

It is evident that they are given into our charge. They leave the arms of the old to grow into something new that carries on the old in all its members. The new is confided to the old, but the old no less to the new.

Consequently, each must respect the other. You must never look down on your children. They are you yourself a stage farther on ; even when they do not yet recognise it nor rise to the knowledge. Nor must the children look down upon their elders. Do not make this command press too hardly upon them, for the old have left a mark upon them which they will never lose, and children show unmistakable traces of us, their elders. Yet their life's aim must be to improve—be it ever so little—this inheritance of theirs.

Our aim then should be to harmonise new and

old, to let one supplement the other as naturally as finding follows seeking. So education must unite firmness and gentleness, the past and the future.

For firmness gives stability, makes backbone. Its function is to strengthen the child's will until he grows firm with himself; gentleness shows regard for that personal freedom in which alone progress can be made.

Harmony between parents and children is the one demand that emerges from our consideration of what our children are.

It is remarkable that human development does not follow this path of harmony, or, at any rate, it has not done so up till now. Man's woe is usually most marked in the fact that the children's desires are in continual opposition to their parents'. The history of civilisation shows, without leaving any room for doubt, that each generation has had desires and aims exactly opposed to those of that preceding, as though two generations formed the field of action for the two supplementary primal powers of yes and no.

The span of time between parents and their children was evidently too short to form a stage in development. Rather were the children more prone to join alliance with the grandparents. The lads laughed at their parents, but their own children were inclined to say: "You needn't laugh, their ideas were all right," thus themselves again setting up opposition to their own parents and showing supplementary stages of development that always made their appearance in consecutive generations.

Hence human hope is fixed on the promise to be found in the sacred writings: "The hearts of the

children shall be turned to the fathers and the fathers to the children."

Thus, and thus alone, will the powers of progress be brought into harmony and all be well, for the children will have found what their fathers sought.

If all is to be right between you and your child's soul, see to it now and here that you in no way hinder the growth of this harmony. We do not know who our children are, but we must study them and help them to their true rights in life, and thus our eyes will be opened to much that no words can explain.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF EDUCATION.

Children have just such an inner nature as our own, neither greater nor less. They do not acquire it in the course of their development, but bring it with them when they come. What we call development is mainly mental and physical adaptation to our conditions.

That, in the main, lies behind us. At the stage of development which we have reached as parents, further progress seems very slow in all, in many, indeed, apparently at a complete standstill.

But what is behind us lies in front of the children; they have to gather strength and experience to live their own lives, whilst we already have acquired the greater part of that which lies within our power here.

Hence Nature has ordained that children shall think first and foremost of themselves. We ought therefore not to expect from them anything but undisguised selfishness. The more they have to acquire in any special stage of development, the

more marked their selfishness, for this is a provision of Nature.

The younger the child, the more merciless his self-absorption. Long before the idea of his own personality appears in thought or speech he is filled with one idea only—himself.

With passing years the rate of development grows slower, bringing, as a consequence, a decrease in selfishness. Nevertheless, it is wiser not to expect any definitely altruistic expression before the twentieth year is reached. In fact, we may have to wait a little longer in the case of boys, since they develop more slowly.

It is therefore normal, healthy selfishness that holds sway in our children's soul.

But one demand of civilisation stands in direct opposition to this primitive state, and this is the desire for mutual help. The higher man's spiritual nature, the more urgent his craving—a vital craving, not a sense of duty—to serve his fellows. The most highly developed of all can only find self-expression in universal service.

In the course of a child's progress through the various stages of his development his spirit and spiritual cravings should make themselves increasingly felt, and selfishness must be conquered.

To help in this conquest is the work of education, but it can only reach complete fruition by experience of service, since no truth can be made our own until it has been tested by experience.

It follows then that parents must show forth the very essence of self-sacrifice ; the more selfish the children, the greater must be the unselfishness of their elders.

If you hold forth to your little flock on the evils

of selfishness you are only acting in ridiculous opposition to Nature's laws. Avoid doing that. But if you yourself learn an ever-increasing forgetfulness of self you help your children to find their true selves. Progressive civilisation must reign in us, selfishness in the children.

It is so throughout Nature. All development is brought about by means of two factors ; one we call the struggle for existence, the other help in living. The names are not perhaps strikingly appropriate, but you understand their meaning. Children carry on the struggle for existence, their elders give help in living. The co-operation of these two factors results in right development.

Hence follows the natural command : Whatsoever ye would that your children should become, that be ye unto them.

But what you cannot be yourself, do not expect from your offspring.

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Secondly, the essential feature, perhaps even the reason of our present existence, is—imperfection. Hence it has not been in any way possible up to the present time to think out a perfect method of education, nor will any such exist in the near future, a statement which finds its strongest confirmation in our store of books on education. For if any education existed that could produce a perfect human being, the books would be superfluous, which they certainly are not.

Now, in all candour, what are we ourselves? Let me speak quite plainly. Many of us have not yet left the brute stage behind. If you have reached a higher point than this, you may feel that service

for others is a sacred, solemn duty, although very difficult of fulfilment ; but few indeed feel such service as a natural craving, the satisfaction of which is indeed our most earnest desire and our highest happiness.

The man who himself knows nothing higher than the struggle for existence must, on no account, expect to find perfection in his children.

The most that, in such a case, we can possibly expect to reach is humbly to take upon our shoulders their imperfections as well as our own, and learn to bear them with the hope of future conquest and improvement.

In any case, be prepared for the fact that your sons' and daughters' progress will only reach a stage so little higher than your own as to be barely perceptible.

Do not wonder at this, nor seek the cause in *the coming generation*, but in *the unfavourable soil* in which they were planted. Seek it in yourself.

Nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that Nature does not deny children to us parents, however low our place on the upward grade. In the propagation of the race there is no evidence of choice of the best, nor any greater evidence in the preservation of those who have passed through the doors of existence here.

On the contrary, we notice with surprise that often it is the noblest to whom the gift of children is denied. If I am not mistaken, Riehl, that great student of mankind, somewhere enunciates, as a truth, that humanity at certain times gathers together all its strength to produce a great man, but then seems completely exhausted with the effort and refuses him any descendant of like worth.

According to that theory the propagation of the lowest human types seems more likely than that of choicer spirits. Is this so?

There is doubtless some truth in it. Then what conclusion must we draw? Surely none other than that development will not confine her efforts to isolated super-men and consign the masses to inferiority and imperfection, but, on the contrary, aims at helping all up to a higher level. Or else it would not break off suddenly in cases of striking advancement.

It follows further that, viewed from Nature's point of view, the mistakes we make in education are by no means the fundamental cause of any slackening in the rate of progress. Or else Nature would be more careful in her distribution of the blessing of children. Amongst rough, savage tribes barrenness is almost non-existent ; amongst civilised nations it has grown to pestilential proportions.

Hence we may deduce a further command : Calmly go on training to the best of your power, and do not think you must give it up because of your mistakes. It is as impossible for any right effort to fall fruitless to the ground as for any force in Nature to come to a sudden stop. The only useful repentance is to do better.

THE AIM AND OBJECT OF THE CARE OF CHILDREN.

We have already mentioned, in passing, one pleasant aim that is easily achieved and that forms a slight reward for the constant trouble and sharp self-denial which is imposed upon us by the

education of children. I will venture to speak of it once more.

The actual love and care we give to our children will some time pass on to the future third generation. That is the course of nature. Speaking generally then, you have no right to expect your child to pour back on you the love that you have lavished on him. Nature's tendency is forward, not backward.

Therefore never speak of children's ingratitude. There is no ingratitude amongst men. Only self-seekers talk of that in their desire to keep all the good things for themselves and to get their every service returned with interest. They are annoyed when any benefit passes on, and give the name of ingratitude to what is really only their own vexation.

No, your children's task is to pass on your kindness, and your reward to see the wide increase of what you have sown.

But there is one thing that I hope you may have as the result of your own efforts, and that is to see your children grow up your friends. It is often said that youth is the time of friendship. True, but these youthful friendships often vanish like the morning dew. Where are all our early friends?

From most we have grown apart. Because they were young they were naturally more taken up with their own affairs than with those of others. And so were we. Some again have grown into wastrels, whom we carefully avoid. The closer tie of marriage has loosened many of friendship's bands, for friendship is to real marriage as promise is to fulfilment.

Yet now, as life grows more lonely, your friend-

ship with your child may grow until it casts a golden light over life's evening.

Hence the early training must, from the very first, rest on the foundation of good comradeship. But this is laid entirely on an unqualified recognition of the equal rights of your child's spiritual nature. Otherwise your discipline will extort from the child an attitude more or less painful in this respect, which is only a sign of inner estrangement.

Do not let that precious possession of life, your children's heartfelt friendship, so lightly escape you, nor content yourself with husks when you have a right to the living grain.

Of course it takes an effort to win the friendship of the younger generation ; they give it easily and with no niggard hand to each other, but to us only after we have worked hard to gain it.

But we hold them in the hollow of our hand, so that our path of conquest is simply this : From the very first, accept your child as he is destined one day to be, and treat him on terms of spiritual equality. Without hesitation or delay throw yourself into the breach of his imperfect, undeveloped knowledge and power, and you may rest assured you will reap your reward in unbounded gratitude and warm friendship.

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But that is only a little subordinate aim, for it sometimes happens that parents and children are fundamentally different, and simply have no affinity with each other. It is not given to all to find the key to each other's hearts, and why should we expect it from every parent and child?

In such a case we must resign ourselves humbly

and uncomplainingly. Perhaps life may bring us many another benefit in the future. I suggest waiting for the grandchildren, who often bestow what the children either cannot or will not give.

The great, the chief, and only aim of all our care and training should be to lead our children to freedom and independence—this indeed is the goal which all humanity is striving to reach.

Every child that grows up free and independent directly helps all human development onward in its mighty aim. It develops as one link of the long chain of growth, but at the same time it directly pushes forward to its own individual goal.

Everyone will see that the highest aim of all training is to teach the child to live his own life. Even the most loving parents cannot feel sure of being able to protect their children all through their lives. Nor should they, for in their surpassing love they might impede their children's liberty with fetters too tight to be borne.

Consequently we must help the children in such a way that they may, as far as possible, learn in untrammelled independence to order their lives as their personal judgment dictates in the course of their development. They are—this we must never forget—born our equals in mental and spiritual capacity, and will reach their prime of life twenty or thirty years later than we ourselves, hence at a time when we shall presumably be distinctly going downhill, and most of us be scarcely able to keep abreast any longer with progressive times.

It is therefore our most sacred duty to train our children to be quite independent even of us. It is true we are their most unselfish—but yet their older—friends and comrades. Should they turn to

us for advice and help, these must always be at their service.

It must be a matter of course between us that we are their best and surest place of refuge. Yet should there ever come a time when they no longer seek our advice, we must not resentfully put difficulties in their path. We undertake the duty to devote ourselves exclusively to their interests, not to our own.

They must be absolutely sure that we will not limit their freedom in any one point, and that our love is quite independent of any action or decision of theirs.

Man can only achieve perfection when he is free, only become great when independent.

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Unfortunately it is an indisputable fact that most people are neither independent nor free ; our relations with our fellow-men bring this about, and the day is still far distant when it shall be no longer true.

Moreover, it is evident to every true friend of humanity that most people are far too easy-going, careless, and undeveloped to desire these higher gifts. They would rather be carried along with the stream and hide their own lack of independence in the current popular ideas.

Nevertheless, we, whose one aim it is to promote our children's welfare, must, at any rate, put before them the possibility of finding and following this path which alone leads mortal men to happiness. And in so doing we best serve both them and humanity.

Whatever else we become and achieve in life may

all fade into nothingness with our name. But that we need not regret ; the only thing that matters is that we faithfully fulfil our duty as links in the long chain of human development.

I cannot imagine any fathers or mothers not filled with the ardent, unspoken wish that their children should become more than they have been. Probe the very depths and ask the criminal classes whether they wish their children to follow the same career of crime. One and all with full accord answer : no, never.

We may perhaps not all have the power to act in accordance with this wish, but one thing at least we can do. We can, from the very first, recognise our children as equals, and tell them that we do so. It is then no longer so difficult to treat them even as we would ourselves wish to be treated. Our children dislike constant interference and limitation of their own individual liberty just as much as we do ourselves.

In this one point is comprised the true relation of all men to one another, that each should mete out to his neighbour only such treatment as he himself would like to receive.

It is not quite an easy position for us parents to maintain, for our children naturally suffer from two disabilities. The first is physical, a disability that ends in conquest only after endless attempts and failures. Yet not one of these failures should have power to cast a cloud upon our hopeful outlook.

The second is mental and spiritual. It is no easy task for them to accommodate themselves to conditions, in great measure perverted and unnatural, with which their unconscious growing natures are brought into contact, especially in more

highly educated classes. Yet not even here must any of the children's much more frequent lapses disturb us in our unswerving conviction that they and we are on an equal footing. Let us never forget that life takes the child all unawares, and that he can learn but very slowly what this world asks of him.

The task before us then is never to look down upon them, but to watch with admiring eyes the working of nature in and for them. Nothing so increases our understanding of our own nature, of the great mystery of existence, as free and unrestrained intercourse with the younger generation.

THE RIGHT WAY OF TRAINING.

The children do not belong to us, but first and foremost to themselves.

You desire to look after your child's real self, i.e. you wish to help it to such freedom and independence as you have or desire for yourself. To be free is to be independent of outer circumstances.

That can only be accomplished in one way. All natural and spiritual truth is recognisable by its simplicity. The only way to freedom is the habit of obedience.

The child comes to the world in no respect free—neither in mind nor body—but free he is to become.

As far as his body goes, you know exactly what should happen, and are glad when he need no longer be carried or led, when he has achieved personal cleanliness and shows gay, happy vitality in quite noticeable feats of strength.

Whence does he get this strength? From him-

self in the natural course of growth. Your only reason for protecting his weakness is that his growth may not be checked.

Do just the same with his soul. It, too, develops strength within itself in the natural course of development. Protect it so long as it is still immature.

Its natural protection is your will, desiring your child's good. By means of your will he must learn to grow strong enough to seek his own good. Consequently he must be obedient to you until he has achieved the perfection possible to him.

He must never—most emphatically never—have his will broken as the old maxims taught. On the contrary, his will must be strengthened to its utmost capacity. It can never be strong enough, and must never suffer the slightest injury. But, to begin with, it needs some outside prop against which to lean. This prop you must provide with your firm will, and against it the child leans in every act of obedience. '

This question of obedience can only be settled at a tender age. Long experience and trustworthy observation lead me to fix the age as ending at the time when the child has got most of his second teeth. If the question is not settled then, it never will be.

Pay good heed to the loss of every milk tooth. You need not set it in gold even if your means would permit, but listen to its silent question: "Have you settled the matter now, or not yet?"

Then harden your will until it becomes a tower of strength. For if your will is just yielding pulp, be assured your child will never rest against it.

Nature herself prevents it, for she has implanted

in him the instinct of self-preservation. If you will weakly yields and you cannot offer him a strength against which to lean, then this natural law compels him to take the guidance of his inner life into his own hands. But since, by reason of his general immaturity, he is not yet fit for this, he will, in all probability, suffer great injury by your weakness, unless he happens to have a very strong character. Even then, all his life through, he will be saddled with a painful strain of hardness if he has not been able in obedience to lean on you.

Every parent who loves his child must make obedience possible, nay, imperative even. Disobedient children are a strong indictment of the parents. The first indictment only ; life will bring a succession of others, and only when your child is old and grey-headed will he come to understand you fully, excuse and pity you. Your children's pity is a heavy burden to bear, the proof of failure in life's task.

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The facts of the case are these. You are beings of equal worth, you and your child. Nothing can alter this, your natural position.

But all characters are not equally strong, any more than all bodies. When different characters come into contact either in business, society, marriage, or in the relation of child to parent, it is self-evidently the stronger that assumes command and leadership.

We can see in this a natural law which perhaps we may call the law of strength of mind. It is an eternal and universal law as true as that the heavier body always forces its own way. Nature is never inconsistent.

Nor can you ever be reproached if in later life your child should prove stronger and more fitted to lead than you are yourself. But whilst he yet has his first teeth—we are still speaking of that period—your experience and more mature years give you such an advantage over your tender little plant that it cannot be beyond your power so to enforce your will, that your growing child may learn to climb by your superior judgment. If you cannot succeed in this, then you are—I crave your pardon—very weak, vastly inferior. You actually cannot manage a little fellow like that!

It is just as well to talk as little as possible about naughtiness in children, for what is popularly called naughtiness is, generally speaking, nothing else but older people's inconvenience caused by the very nature of the child. Healthy children are naughty children, whilst good children are only, as a rule, sick children.

There is one, and only one, real naughtiness, and that is conscious opposition to your will. But this must occur once, at any rate, in every child—we are speaking now only of little children.

This is the solemn question Nature puts to you : Are you capable of guiding a child? And the child, instinctively and unconsciously, gives it outward expression.

In her distribution of children Nature goes to work apparently without much discrimination, but not so in the matter of training, and she will never permit a strong child's will to be subordinate to a weakly parent's rule—indeed, she cannot.

You must be the conqueror then, if your house is not to be upset, or worse still, your child's life burdened with difficulties it need never have met.

And it is not difficult. Obedience is simply the product of two factors—firmness and gentleness. Either, without the other, is torture ; only both, in fitting proportion, give happiness and contentment—just as man and woman are both necessary to form the child's body, so firmness and gentleness are indispensable for its training.

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Innumerable fine threads unite parents and children ; the nature of their relationship is such that they cannot but feel each other. No words are needed. The child indeed is long without any at all, and again long before he can find those he exactly needs. But they understand each other.

Any mother—and any real father too—knows what the child desires and needs before it opens its lips.

No words are needed, but sympathetic hearts. Whoever brings a child into the world, either of set purpose or unintentionally, and, afterwards, is not ready to sacrifice himself for his child is a criminal.

But if you do sacrifice yourself—and of course you will—then obedience will follow. Firmness makes your will inexorable, and gentleness turns obedience into happiness and delight.

Still there comes a time when the child's whole nature rebels against you, as a spirited horse tries his will against his rider's. Then see that you conquer, and your victory will be a life-long benefit to the child.

How you win this victory will depend on your personal power. If your whole mind is set upon it, you will need no words, or at any rate but few.

Where there are wordy outpourings and long arguments as to obedience or disobedience parents have little chance of success. Whoever wastes many words, as a rule wastes his superiority with them.

Blows, too, are really not needed. I have reared many cattle, sheep and pigs, but I have never once seen them train their young for life with blows, although, as domesticated animals, they might easily have adopted human methods.

Blows, however, are not human, but inhuman. Children are of equal parentage with you. Would you, I wonder, like to be beaten? You may perhaps deserve it sometimes, but blows to you would mean an outrage to your sense of honour, your self-respect, your whole nature.

Moreover, there is not one single part of the human body that can be beaten without danger of permanent physical injury, least of all in a tender child. Ask your doctor whether this is not so, if you do not know it yourself.

And one other point. Do you know that blows set free premature sexual feelings? Children that are beaten lose their innate refinement. Coarse-minded adults as a rule have been beaten too much, not too little.

An earlier, coarser age believed in blows, I know; it knew no better, nor did it inflict such injury on its children in their lower stage of refinement. But the progressive culture of our generation has made us more and more sensitive. It aims, indeed, at mental and spiritual development, so that blows become more and more inappropriate. An understanding of natural laws is more helpful than old-time maxims.

Solomon is the author of some of these to be

found in the Bible. But Solomon himself does not seem to have been very successful in his educational methods. His son, Rehoboam, was a coarse, undeveloped man, the product probably of too many beatings. So do not let new truth be overshadowed by old saws, for that would be a confession of poverty of mind.

Yet make an honest effort to conquer without blows, for conquer you must.

There is one fault—untruth—that justly rouses many parents to wrath.

Children are often born with a predisposition to it. That makes it a difficult problem, but one that no beating will ever solve. The greatest self-discipline is needed then if you, more than all others, are to set an example of truth and sincerity, yet this is the surest remedy.

But many an untruth is the direct result of hard blows. Parents who deal in these should seek the cause of their children's untruth in themselves, and put it to a speedy end.

But if you are making the clumsy mistake of beating your children, at least repent and reform. You cannot make a single mistake that may not be pardoned.

I must also confess that in younger, more inexperienced days I, too, felt that a few blows were an absolute necessity.

A slap on the outstretched, naughty hand, caught in the very act, is often the quickest way of settlement, a pardonable mistake, but a mistake for all that. For, after all, it is the degradation of one of equal birth, and a sign of our own loss of self-control.

But a deliberate, postponed, thorough beating,

carried out perhaps when the father comes home and hears the complaint, is brutality worthy only of the torture-chamber. You are your child's father, not his executioner. With such blows as these you break every tie that binds your soul to your child's—every single one ; there is no surer means of destroying them for ever than such a beating in its merciless premeditation.

We soon learnt that children must grow up entirely without blows. But there is an open rebellion that breaks out on occasion in every healthy child and sets every fibre tingling in mutual feelings of strife.

In such a case as this—which is sure to occur on some occasion—I think the most sensible and effective method is to take the child to some empty room and to leave him there until he has regained his self-composure.

If possible, leave the door unlocked, for even locking the child in humiliates a free-born spirit. But let him remain alone until you are quite certain that the battle is over. Above all, guard against any outside interference. It is never possible for parents who are at variance to secure simple obedience.

Meantime see that you regain your own calm and self-control, and in quietness and confidence repossess your soul. When you are entirely master of yourself, go to your child. Say nothing ; words are a desecration here. Last of all, do not degrade your child into a forced promise of better behaviour. The occasion is too momentous for such nonsense as that. Take his hand quietly and gently, and, without a word, lead him back to ordinary life in the unswerving conviction that you

have won the battle and that the child can do no other than acknowledge your supremacy. Let all your love then be tinged with serious earnestness, for the rule is in your hands.

It may happen that such contests recur. The more complete your victory, the less fear of this. And that is right and desirable, for repetition of a solemn scene is very inimical to its success. One or two such victories should suffice for life ; they are well worth your trouble.

Above all, no attempt should ever be made to force a child to any action as long as any excitement upsets your mind or the child's. It is essential that both of you should be calm before anything decisive can be effectually done. In nothing is superiority so plainly shown as in inner calm.

Afterwards one word from you will be enough. Simply say "no," but say it so that your hearer feels no temptation to ask for your reasons. A parent who gives reasons to little children trains them in disobedience. He will never have an opportunity to give reasons to those same children as they grow older, for they will never ask for any more.

There are parents—I know many such—who have not succeeded in gaining the victory at the critical time. The time at their disposal was very short, and they have lost the battle. There are two paths left, either one of which they generally follow.

The first is one of continual discussion ; all the time, at every opportunity, they will try to haggle with the children, and, as a rule, will each time get the worst of the bargain. That means the children

have taken their training into their own hands ; it was beyond their parents' power. This is the better of the two ways.

The other is one of brute force. The parents feel their own inferiority, so make themselves into tyrants. To the end of their days they are their children's greatest torment. The sons generally get away from the reign of terror, but the unfortunate daughters, who perhaps cannot find refuge with the first husband that offers, have my sympathy. Heaven alone knows what they suffer.

It is a terribly solemn warning to parents. Never let a sigh of suffering rise and condemn you. If you could not conquer, at least accept your defeat honourably. Your children's forgiveness will cover your incapacity to adopt the only method that could bring their training to a successful issue.

PARENTS' DUTIES.

There are two points that must be quite clear to you from the very beginning if you wish to give any consideration at all to your child's character.

You must learn to have at any rate a general understanding of one another. But that you can have only within the limits of the same social standing.

It is therefore indisputable that you should bring up your child in the same circle in which you move yourself. If you wish to act otherwise with him, then let him rise above you. But see to it that he never sinks below you through any fault of yours.

The higher the social circle in which you move the greater will be your child's desire for inde-

pendence. His upbringing therefore must be so ordered that, with his majority, he also attains, if possible, complete independence from parental control. His further continuance with you must be an entirely free gift on his part, the requital for all your efforts for his good.

This is how things should be. About the beginning of his twentieth year—it is impossible to fix a hard-and-fast rule—your child must be allowed to take the management of his life into his own hands. All your part in the future is to be his adviser only ; moreover, you must even be prepared to accept, without bitterness, the prospect of his declining your advice and seeking a more congenial counsellor. That will entirely depend upon how much confidence he has been able to place in you, and this is most intimately connected with the way in which that question of obedience was solved.

This question ought to have been decided somewhere about the sixth year. So that fourteen years are left to accustom him to liberty.

Begin at first as slowly as possible, but let the pace steadily increase in speed. Liberty is the gift of confidence, the return with interest of the child's obedience. In this way only will love be shown as the free return of confidence, a gift that brings earth's highest happiness to every parent on whom it is bestowed.

In the intervening fourteen years, then, a child must choose his calling, prepare for it, learn to choose his companions, get a just estimate of the opposite sex, and find a right attitude to money and property. He should already have had some personal experience of money transactions, even if

these first beginnings have only been on a small scale.

So there is much to be done in these fourteen years, and parents have many opportunities of showing their love and keeping open the path to their children's hearts. The tasks indeed are so many and so varied that one surely is especially yours, and will offer you one road at least to your child's confidence.

If you have his obedience by his sixth year, by his twentieth you will most certainly have his confidence as his own spontaneous offering. But if you have not his obedience by then—and consequently never—you will have, at any rate, fourteen years left in which to win, in one way or another, a certain measure of his confidence. But do not be fool enough to act the part of tyrant, and so destroy the last ties of confidence between your inmost hearts.

In the training for liberty and independence, there must be no difference between the sexes. Under your guidance and care your son must grow into a free man, your daughter no less into a free woman.

Earlier ages have placed their daughters at an incredible disadvantage. They granted their sons freedom of action for body and soul, but restricted their daughters in both directions. They bade these wait for husbands; if they came, the sexes, from the very beginning, were unequally matched. It was terribly difficult for woman to reach real equality with man. But supposing no husbands came? Then all that was left was uneducated, soured old maids, the object of everyone's contempt and ridicule. The woman who lacked a

man's protection had unending suffering. And to this you were condemned—poor daughters—by parental love!

Your daughter must be brought up to be independent of marriage, so that she may either give her hand as the gift of a proud, free woman, or absolutely withhold it, unless all her heart goes unreservedly with it. Marriage should never be degraded into a place of refuge from parents' tyranny. Under the best conditions it is no easy matter, but undertaken with any ulterior motive it is, from the very first, a failure.

Sons and daughters are different, it is true, but of absolutely equal value as members of the human family. We may give them a different education, but never one in any way inferior. Its aim for both sexes must be life-long liberty and independence.

If you would serve your child's true nature, this must be your duty as parent, to prepare it for independence in its twentieth year on the same social plane as your own. This is your first duty.

The second is very closely connected with it. The higher the circle in which you and your child move, the less—this world being what it is—can he dispense with a suitable money equipment.

What is money? The most momentous invention of the human mind, for money is, up till now, the most effective instrument for the conquest of the material world.

The human mind has invented many thousand tools, and scarcely one that is not dangerous, the most dangerous being naturally that which is most effective. The child must therefore have been trained in its use.

For consider : do you follow the old saw's advice and lock away from your child knives, forks, scissors, candles, or do you not rather teach him how to handle them?

Changing times demand a changed attitude. As chemist I have not found it requisite to put even the most dangerous substances beyond reach of my children, but, instead, I have explained to them their nature.

The most dangerous, yet the most useful and common of tools, is money. - It is your duty to accustom your children to it, if you would not do them a life-long injury. Life is never without danger ; the higher the development the greater the danger. We must therefore teach our children to conquer rather than to flee from it.

For the moment, money is the most effective lever we can possibly use in dealing with things material. I hope—and believe—that some day there will be still better levers, but at present we have none.

The nearer any human being stands to what is purely material, the more closely he is bound to it ; the greater his enslavement to money, the more doubtful his liberty and independence. For these depend to-day on the right use of money.

If you bring your children up to liberty and independence, then you cannot but realise that your child must be made independent of you in money matters as well.

If, therefore, you have brought him up in the enjoyment of easy circumstances, you have tacitly assumed the duty of entrusting him at the proper age with considerable means.

There are parents who, partly from avarice,

partly from love of power, refuse this independence to their children. They keep them dependent upon themselves, binding by want of money, and, instead of training them to independence, tempt them into the paths of hypocrisy. Such parents counteract all that was good or praiseworthy in their early training of their children by this selfish course of action in later years.

We do not say, of course, that they ought to give over all their possessions to their children, so that possibly they, in their turn, may be dependent on the younger generation. But they ought to give them so much for their own exclusive use, that these children, whom they have accustomed to wealth, should be independent of their parents without feeling the pinch of poverty.

Any parent who cannot do this, or who does not wish to part with his property, is aware of the fact years before, and must therefore give his children the best money substitutes, i.e. knowledge and training. He must give them a timely intimation that there will be no money for them, but that he intends to keep them on a social equality with himself, and will therefore see that they get sufficient knowledge and training to ensure for them a freedom and independence in their future life.

Here, too, there must be no difference made between the sexes. Many paths to independence lie before the woman of to-day, and many more are continually being opened. Our daughters ought of course to be trained for marriage, but their liberty must be safeguarded by a position of independence, secured to them by private means or by their own work and efforts. Every parent who wishes to keep his children must give them

their independence. For whoever tries to keep them in bondage will lose them for ever.

WHAT PARENTS OUGHT NOT TO DO.

From the very first, respect and honour humanity in your child, and treat him as you, in his place, would wish to be treated.

That is the secret of all training, of true humanity indeed.

Consequently you must never either unduly emphasise or belaud in your child's presence any superiority you happen to have by reason of your advantage in age.

Many children have to listen *ad nauseam* to recitals of what is unfitting for children but permitted to their elders. They have to put up with a contemptuous treatment that, far from encouraging, entirely destroys all self-respect, and, added to this, there is such continual prohibition, fault-finding and nagging that the poor child never has any peace nor opportunity for self-realisation.

Should we ever venture merely to suggest to such people that there are many better methods than theirs, we have committed an unpardonable sin. The poor children have to submit to it, as martyrs of our self-conceit.

Many people, too, have the unpleasant trick of putting their children to shame before strangers by making fun of them or recounting all their faults and failings. Of these I simply ask: Would you like such treatment for yourselves? In this way the children are trained in the very faults held up for condemnation.

No, whatever reproofs are necessary let them be

made in private and in love as well as solemn earnest. A reproof is only effectual, if it is an act of confidence, a heart-to-heart talk.

Other parents are overwhelmed with admiration of their children when they notice their future superiority in many points to themselves. A small girl of my acquaintance, once, lost in thought, clasped her hands as if in prayer, and lifted her eyes to heaven. Unfortunately her mother had noticed this chance gesture: "Child, look like that again—yes, exactly like that!" Then the child had to do it again for her father, for her cousins and aunts, and at last the mother actually dragged her off to the photographers to be perpetuated as the little Madonna.

The picture was hung over the couch in the best parlour, and to this monument of folly—about ten inches square—I was led by the parents. "Now, child, show the gentleman!" and the poor little creature had to go through her Madonna-antics once again.

That, then, is a warning what not to do.

Man must indeed have some inner spark of divinity, or else so many children could not grow into decent human beings in spite of all the education we give them.

A very repulsive failing is tittle-tattle and gossip amongst men and women. We have all suffered from it; it seems born in not a few.

Yet do not, at any rate, foster it in your child. Don't worry him by unnecessary, endless chatter. Even grown-up people can scarcely bear it, and remember a child is much more sensitive, and may possibly be tempted in this way to pour forth the same empty nothings as yourself.

Never let your child carry tales about the servants or of all sorts of things in the house or outside. A parent who joins his children in spying on others cannot be surprised if they learn to gossip. It is best to let your children see that tittle-tattle has no interest for you.

Are you peevish and irritable at times? "Yes," you answer. Then why do you not allow your children to be so too occasionally? Children are always expected to be "good." Their elders are often quite the opposite; yet we allow ourselves to scold children when they fail, a most unjust method of treatment.

Every human being has bad hours and days, the mental reaction of some physical discord. The child's sensitive body is most liable to this, so give your child time to grow calm again; the more finely strung he is, the longer he will need. And beware, at all times, of difficulty, of insisting—possibly by forcible means—on your own ideas of goodness. When the upset is over and your child once again ready for your love, you can have a kindly talk with him about the matter, although indeed it is unnecessary, because he sees it for himself and will feel boundless gratitude to you for bearing with his ill-humour.

Besides, a child ought never to be roughly or harshly treated. He is your equal from the very first. Adults would not submit to it, although it would not do them any harm. It is fatal to children; their sensitive nature is badly fitted for harsh treatment. Who knows if most of the nervousness in the world might not be traced back to educational methods.

What parents ought not to do? Just what the

majority do! Whatever you wish your child to learn you will teach him best by your own example.

Lastly, do not use your child to test the efficacy of any selection of educational theories. Rather than that, educate not him, but yourself. You can never go wrong if you always honour and love your child as one as nobly born as yourself.

III

THE CHILD AND PHYSICAL CARE

"The path to the child's soul leads through the body."

LIFE-CIRCLES IN CHILDHOOD.

IT is well known that every human being passes through a series of circles of development in which he shows a correspondence with all nature.

If you throw a pebble into the water, it makes a circular ripple, which is succeeded by a larger and again a larger in endless succession, all exactly alike, all complete in themselves, but each greater than the one before, until the largest of all beats and breaks at last upon the shore.

It is the same in human life, for Nature is everywhere consistent, having but one source and origin. And so has man.

A new-born child is a completely new phenomenon, that will make its own ripples, smaller or greater, all alike, ever increasing in size, all self-contained, until they are swallowed up by the eternal greatness on whose bosom we float, one and all alike.

Every human being personally represents, in his own individual way, the whole of humanity. Not a single one is ever repeated exactly, yet they are, through all their diversity—human beings.

In each is repeated on a small scale the develop-

ment through which the race has passed. These great stages are reflected in life-circles, many of which are to be found during childhood.

Our understanding of things past and present depends on our passing through and gaining experience of these stages of growth. Everyone knows that we only understand what has come within our experience. Hence man can understand all the natural world, because he bears it in its entirety in his own being.

The child is an incomplete, unique, and possibly essential portion of humanity, that grows out of us in a strange and wondrous way, and must be looked upon as a portion of the great river of life. Looking at your child from this point of view, you will most easily succeed in approaching your high calling with reverence, and will, quietly and simply, fulfil most of its demands as matter-of-course.

For this reason we can make use of the simplest and most unlearned in the care of children, provided only they have a feeling for Nature.

Now, what are these development-circles? They are different stages of every individual, each of which represents a definite era of life on this earth; they are, so to speak, rings in the tree of life, each circle, however, betokening perhaps thousands of years.

Hence it is clear that by far the greater number of these development-circles transpire before the child opens his eyes to the light of day.

The stages of development in a new-born child are those through which the human race has passed. Each corresponds with a period of humanity which is again repeated in the individual. Those that lie in the most distant past are of

course the most compressed, hence the varying lengths of the periods of growth.

Childhood throughout is the remembrance of humanity's paradise.¹ Each individual passes through Paradise once more, each is expelled, but each takes part in the struggle for the perfecting of Man. Nature does not ask as to whether he will or no ; does not consider whether or not he is ground to powder in the fight, but puts each and all to the test. Those she can use make for progress.

The child's first life-circle is embraced in but six short weeks—for the child, however, a long, momentous time. In it he learns to form his first judgments of the world. To judge is man's distinctive privilege, marking him out as destined to rule.

Within six weeks the young ruler learns to laugh and to cry, to give a joyful assent or an emphatic denial. The new-born infant can only scream, but tears and smiles appear in six weeks or so.

You see how important this period is. Evidently man was once a being who could neither laugh nor cry, but could only meet the mystery of existence with amazement or a scream. Then he learnt to assent and dissent, to give unprompted expression to joy and sorrow. Every child experiences once more this momentous awakening of his conscious mind within the short space of the first six weeks of life. Each mother experiences it alone with him, and has no other duty than to give him then her fostering help and care.

'Laughter and tears are but expressions of assent

¹ Cf. on this point more detailed considerations in Lhotzky's *The Future of Mankind*.

and dissent, and as such have a special significance. As life goes on, the fountain of tears runs dry in many, is much less full in all. Laughter stays with us to the last, and, as a rule, increases—a sure proof that this earth is not the vale of woe it is so often called.

The memory of this human period so long gone by, now embodied for these few weeks in your child, is naturally the most delicate period of his physical life. The memories of an even older period are less hard, because the child is still entirely wrapped around with a protecting defence ; but the period of which we are now speaking could not be passed in that sure refuge, because his first judgments of the world have now to be formed. So the child must already be in the world and able to look at it with open eyes.

But, at any rate, Nature has arranged that, at this period, the mother must be entirely withdrawn from life's activities and belong to him alone.

This short but solemn time opens for you the way to your child's inner being, and lays the foundation of all your after-relations. All that is due to your child for these six weeks may be summed up in two words : cleanliness and his mother's milk.

One other thing must be added to brighten the outer life that so nearly affects the inner. See to it that the awakening spirit finds more cause to assent than to dissent ; give it more opportunity to laugh than to cry.

Kindliness is really the only natural attitude to a child. Remember, it never cries without a cause.

A well-known children's doctor used to tell of a child that kept on screaming, to the horror

of its young parents, who could find no way of soothing it. At last they sent for the doctor. He undressed it to make a thorough examination. Then, lo and behold! he found wrapped up, by some oversight, in its binder, of all things—a fork. This removed, the child soon grew quiet. If, then, your child cries, remove the cause as quickly as may be.

It is not an indifferent matter whether a child enters upon this life miserable or happy. Happiness alone can conquer life, misery always means defeat. To pass through life with joyful assent and not with lamentations of dissent is the highest art of all.

Thus, you see, care of body and soul go hand in hand. Yes and no are the great impelling forces in life. Give your child the affirmative outlook, and teach him to meet and conquer the negative; this is the wisdom of all early training.

And for six momentous weeks the mother has no other duty but this incumbent upon her.

BEFORE HE FINDS HIS FEET.

All kinds of important changes take place in the child with the coming of laughter and tears. This can be observed even in his sleep and in his growing comprehension—so greatly to be desired—of quiet rest at night. In other things, too, he is seen to make progress in development, often in a few days, as he solves his problems, one after another.

The successive stages show that mankind has once passed through periods when they not only had an inner consciousness of superiority, but also

so keen a desire to prove it that they learnt to assume an upright position.

In the course of the next few months your child will grow very heavy. With smiles and tears he stretches his limbs and carries out movements that require increasing watchfulness, lest he should have a fall that might perchance cripple the tender little frame. So children have to be continually carried, and the hardest time of all is before they find their feet.

And many are their tumbles. These cannot be avoided, and do not hurt them as a rule. In the bygone period, represented by this stage of the child's development, man must have had amazing health and agility. Hence the tiny body meets and overcomes many dangers, as if they were all part of the game.

Still it is a tender little body, none too well-fitted for the hurly-burly of life to-day, so, at any rate, do all you can to guard it from falls and injury.

It very soon tries to fall out of its perambulator in its efforts to reach the ground, where it has to accomplish the outstanding feat of this period of its development and learn to walk. So put it as much as possible on the ground.

It is to be hoped you have no cradle. This horrible instrument of torture ought, by now, to be non-existent. Rocking is simply intoxication by mechanical means ; it soothes by stupefying. But intoxication of whatever nature is very harmful.

There are only two ways of soothing children. One is to give them time to compose themselves and quieten down, and this is most effectively done if their thoughts can be pleasantly diverted.

The second is the peace and kindness with which the mother enwraps them, for no comfort is like a mother's.

If you take care to be your child's source of comfort, your souls will be united with imperishable bonds. Continue to be this place of consolation even when, in course of time, younger children follow and make ever-increasing demands upon your strength and attention.

This self-composure of a child's is far more important than one is inclined to believe. The whole of life brings with it no other lesson than this alone—to find ourselves, and from that strong point of vantage to gain the mastery over all else.

If this is not learnt in the nursery, it is no easy lesson in later days. Many a mother thinks she can relieve her children of this task, and thereby does them an infinite wrong. No, the screaming child in the second of life's circles needs continual practice in it. It is, besides, the best preparation for the solving of the question of obedience, which, after all, may be summed up as self-control and willing acquiescence.

There are many grown-ups who can neither endure nor conquer adversity. Such as these are unable to bring to a successful issue the trials and tests of this life, but go down before them. Probably they lacked all sensible training in the little struggles of their early development.

We may give as the guiding principle of this phase of life: steady, watchful care, but no coddling. Since our only wish is to train one of equal standing with ourselves to liberty and independence, we must give him opportunity to conquer his little sorrows without our aid. Should they, however,

prove beyond his strength, we must help him back to peace and freedom.

Here too we must mention another point. A matter of greatest importance for your child's soul is the thought-atmosphere in which he grows up. Thoughts are a much greater power than most of us suspect. They it is that move the world and decide the fate of nations. All Nature, indeed, is nothing but the visible expression of thought.

It is, therefore, not a matter of indifference as to the thoughts with which you allow your child to be surrounded. Even adults are keenly sensitive to the pleasant or unpleasant nature of the thoughts with which you regard them ; whilst upon sensitive children they exert untold influence.

This is especially true with regard to the bodily care of the child. There are some mothers who are in constant anxiety for their children, and surround them with such a barrier of fear as leaves no room for any peace of mind. But these constant mental alarms will soon bear fruit in the delicate bodies ; and nervous troubles, as well as all kinds of physical disturbances, are the inevitable result, the expression only of this anxious fear.

Indeed, many children suffer from illness and minor bodily ailments entirely as the result of a too anxious mother's fears.

The foolish fear of infection is a pronounced infirmity in certain mothers of to-day. They suspect every acquaintance they meet of possibly having sick children at home, and thus spreading infection ; if one of their children falls ill, the blame is put on some acquaintance who has been to the house, or whom they have chanced to meet.

This is foolishness, the result of ignorance. The air is, at all times, filled with deadly germs ; but see that you keep full of the joy of life and encircle your child with no other thoughts than those of gaiety and confidence. Meet every acquaintance happily, without fear, and cast aside that silly nervousness. Then your mind will flood your child's with peace and joy, which soon bear fruit in his confidence and strength.

Life brings with it innumerable dangers which we cannot avoid—nor is it ever intended that we should. We have but one weapon by which we can conquer them—our own strength of mind. But how can this develop if you check it on every occasion?

Your nervous fear is the result of a false idea of possession. Your child does not belong to you, but to himself, so that it is not your duty, nor have you the right, to be so anxious. Nature wanted the greatest freedom from worry for the child, and deemed this to be the highest boon she could give him. But if you cross her purposes with your foolish fears, you cannot fail to cause mischief of some kind.

Many children have their whole life spoilt by the unwise atmosphere of fear in their nursery days.

Many others come to an untimely end—not as the result of danger, but rather of its fear.

If we only had a more intelligent feeling for Nature, we should have to confess that the ignorance in which we, as frail children, enter upon an exceedingly perilous existence cannot be a disadvantage to us in our struggles there.

Hence you do not need to peer on every side in search of horrible possibilities, nor continually

to upset your child's sense of security, but you should rather cultivate a brave and cheerful outlook as regards your child.

No real harm can happen, provided we take up a right attitude. Even if trials come—many must and will—then let all the strength of your happy confidence meet them when they are really there—but not before.

Nature gave your child another sure protection in addition to his sweet innocence—i.e. an instinct of self-preservation.

This we must try to develop, nor shall we lack continual opportunity. Before your child can walk he has had innumerable falls, and shed many tears over numerous little accidents. Teach him to treat all these things lightly. When you comfort his distress, say to him: "It wasn't very bad."

In this way he will learn courage from your strength, and also the great art of meeting all life's troubles with: "After all, it is not very bad." By degrees he will learn to be his own consoler.

But if your child knocks himself against a corner, you must not scold and strike the naughty corner, but rather say to the little one: "Next time try to look where you are going."

If you set a spark to revenge to soothe his pain, later on you will have a fire you cannot extinguish; the first steps are the most important.

Never fail to explain to your child that life is full of difficulties; you must not, of course, fill him with vague fears, but teach him to meet whatever comes with all the strength he can muster.

Early accustom his body to fresh air and cold water. Never forget, of course, that his body is

frail. But fresh air and cold water brace his natural constitution, because they form a connecting link with Nature and her strength. Fresh air and water do more to cure children's ailments than all the apothecaries' drugs.

They have, besides, a mental effect, for the somewhat sharp and keen touch about them both gives courage and develops strength.

The whole nuisance of catching cold—which, as a rule, is only an ailment due to parental fears—can be avoided all through life by the sensible use of air and water. Think what a gain that is!

As we all know, mankind of to-day have little fear of God, but much of a draught and of many another thing in the world. See to it that your child learns to fear God and nothing else whatever—as an old German knight once said boldly. 'You will, of course, only succeed in this if you first gain the mastery of all your own nervous fears.'

Education is self-discipline—nothing more.

WHEN YOUR CHILD CAN WALK AND TALK.

The first tooth and the first step—two important beginnings—come very close together in point of time. And not by chance, for they are the two signs of man's chief superiority—his speech and his upright position.

A time of joy and of greater ease now begins for the parents. The first year is very heavy, and the child's first steps bring relief in many ways, yet slowly, for it is a long and toilsome progress from those first steps to real walking, and one that demands great watchfulness.

Walking is the first expression of independence ;

you will notice unmistakable signs of this in the child's whole nature at this fresh stage of development. This independence must be fostered, but if you have made a beginning with fresh air and water and the conquest of all fear, you will find no difficulty in going farther along the same road.

The knowledge of dangers now increases. The little feet all unconsciously lead the child into many perils, so that there is need to begin teaching the simplest precautions.

This is when the child must make acquaintance with knife, fork, scissors, and fire, to learn their uses and dangers. The use and misuse of man's simplest tools must be made as clear to the child as his power of understanding will allow.

No sooner can he walk without help than he must be taught to distinguish between the possible and the impossible. The child, we still carry in our arms, stretches out eager hands to the moon in his effort to grasp the shining body, but now he must find out what alone is possible, a lesson for which every day offers him ample opportunities.

But there are also human impossibilities with their own laws, and of these, too, the little walker must get his first ideas. He will get them from you ; his first impossibility should be the bending of your will.

At the awakening of conscious independence he must be told of the great over-ruling power surrounding our life, a power that does not submit to us, but to which we ourselves have to bow.

You must be the gateway through which the majesty of law, solemn but kindly, makes its entry into your child's life. If you cannot be this, then with all the certainty of a natural law you will

lose the soul of your child. An early, less civilised age gave to the world this saying : He who loves his son chastises and punishes him. A deep truth lies hidden here, a truth that did good service in those days. We, however, will say : He who loves his child teaches him obedience.

In obedience lies the decision for the whole of life. The time at your disposal for teaching it is short, limited to the period of the child's first teeth. The sooner you accomplish it the easier for you and the child.

The stronger the spirit, to whom you have opened the door of life, the more violent his efforts at resistance. Rejoice at them with the unmixed joy of one who trains a pure-bred steed and gets at last the mastery. But conquer them at all hazards. We certainly never ought to beat a child, yet it is better for him to be beaten than not to learn obedience at the only time when it can be mastered.

But if you do not succeed in conquering, then give up the battle ; you are beaten, and any further attempts you may afterwards make can only end in torture, torture both for parent and child.

Sometimes a child comes later on into the hands of a capable teacher, who is able to modify some of the failure caused by the parents' weakness. His efforts, however, will not train the children to obey their parents, but, at most, only those laws which they impose upon themselves.

So yield with a good grace, and at least see that you put them into good hands.

* * * * *

The child's first step introduces him to a stage of marked physical development, to real human

life, real being, in the time which is an echo of that golden age, still living in man's memory, the paradise which every human being enjoys for a brief space.

Its outward, enthralling signs are the upright walk, the nakedness of innocence, and the growing, all-embracing power of speech.

What a joy it is to us parents to guide our own children through this Garden of Eden and to lead them where they catch the bright reflection of the Golden Age. Such a joy passes description ; it must be experienced to be understood, and happy is he who enjoys it in the soul of his child.

The care of the body plays a great part at this time. Ample opportunities must be given for the exercise of the awakening powers ; cramped they must never be, and yet never overstrained.

Little perils must be overcome cheerfully and bravely. Children, when once they find their feet, run after danger. But do not then stand lamenting and wringing your hands, full of nervous fears. They are evidently following a healthy instinct of their growing independence, so do you too listen to Nature's voice and delight in your children's high spirits, the surest of testimony to their bodily well-being.

But, all unnoticed, keep a watchful eye, lest they run too great dangers, for you know the limits of their powers. Yet if, in spite of your care, they sometimes over-estimate these powers and hurt themselves, do not pity them over much, but teach them to swallow their tears and comfort them in true motherly fashion, not in accordance with any set rules, but simply and naturally.

A child's inability should never be treated with contempt from his elder's superior point of view. For, to begin with, it will not, by any means, be long before the child's strength will far surpass your own. How will you like your lusty offspring to pour contempt on you when you bend under the burden of old age and infirmity? Therefore give fullest recognition to their efforts and prize all their little accomplishments, although, at the same time, of course, you will let them know there are others even greater, but for the present beyond their power.

With regard to food, opinions differ so much that we cannot—and will not—give a decisive dictum on either side. If you feel it necessary, talk to your doctor about it.

For my part, I think it best, in any case, to listen as much as possible to Nature's voice, so that I would never force what he does not like upon a child, nor should he ever be compelled to eat what he does not want. Many children, who never really want their food before they lose their baby teeth, can scarcely be satisfied when the others are coming, and more than make up for any earlier deficiency. I have often noticed that such children turn out the strongest in after life.

If this time is, above all, an echo of the golden days of Paradise, we must see that in any case we provide the child's body with plenty of fruit and vegetables. Yet if he asks for meat, you will not be wrong in giving it—only not too much, for it is very stimulating—and see what he does have is good and wholesome. But if you give meat, see you give salt with it. Our body requires a variety of salts, and to withhold them means failure in

health. Many of these exist in properly grown vegetables, but must be added to flesh-foods.

The best beverage is either milk or water. Nourishing drinks and preparations are not worth much. If they really were, they would not be puffed up to the present degree. What requires such excessive praise has no real value.

All that is of true worth is simple and natural ; simplicity is the distinguishing mark of the divine, the true, the natural. Bear in mind that Nature manages without preparations and advertisements.

But all food must be prepared with love and served with kindness. A house filled with children must be flooded with sunny rays of kindness, for it is the home of those whose very nature is sunshine.

It does not so much matter what the meals are as how they are eaten. Children must be taught good manners at table at the earliest possible moment. As a man eats, so he is. Since we gather round our tables about three times a day, meals offer the best opportunity for the training of the growing children, an opportunity which no one should neglect. Care in eating and silence when others are speaking are two virtues which must be learnt at our parents' table, or not at all.

This table is the altar of the home, and should be consecrated by the happiness and earnestness of those around it.

The greatest amongst men raised a meal into a divine service, and claimed it for the Father's honour. A deep and sacred mystery lies hidden here, a mystery that should not be wanting wherever men gather together to eat.

The children must learn to be quiet and listen :

but we should be careful that they can hear only what is right. A meal should provide food, not for the body only, since man does not live by bread alone.

In this case, then, their elders must, above all, keep a check on themselves so that they may help, not hinder, the child's inner growth.

At table, too, a child best learns that he cannot always have all he sees. It is better for him to learn this in the shelter of his parents' home and affection than in life's hard battle, where every day tempts us with thousands of things, only to refuse them.

Yet do not be nervous and over-sparing in your treatment of the children. Give them in all confidence something sweet and any special dainty. Provided you give it wisely and in moderation, you need not fear it will make the children greedy. As a rule, the only greedy eaters are those who have never had any pleasant tit-bits.

The purest and best of sweet things is honey; the most wholesome too. The less natural and simple a food, the more indigestible; pure honey should always form part of a child's diet. It is true that it often causes some little skin eruption if the blood is not in a good state, but by so doing only proves its value as a blood-purifier.

Honey is the one thing that is completely absorbed into the blood. Buy it only from a bee-keeper who will stake his honour on its perfect purity; pay any price to secure this.

In everything, eating, drinking, things physical and things spiritual, learn to listen to the voice of Nature. Your children will reawaken for you the echoes of a Paradise Lost; learn to get direct

understanding of them, not to read about them in books. Strive to join with your children in their Eden rather than to act as an avenging angel to drive them out, or as a serpent to lead their feet astray.

Your child may spend his life surrounded by nothing but love and sunshine, provided he has learnt one thing only—obedience. The firmer you can be, the more liberty let him enjoy.

THE SECRET OF SEX.

Sensible physical care should include a careful watch for the first stirrings of the sex-instinct. This is too well-known to need detailed treatment here, but I am very anxious that more emphasis should be laid on the spiritual side of this branch of physical training than is usually the case.

The sex-instinct ushers in that great period of life when the ego demands, with primeval force, its own completion in another. This inner craving is so powerful that it shakes every fibre of even the physical body.

It is a great and sacred vital instinct, that overwhelms human life with a force beyond all others, like an irresistible flood—a flood indeed it is, as it advances, wave upon wave, slow but sure, always creeping onwards, gathering strength as it comes, and under certain conditions tearing down every opposing barrier.

Thus it enters your child's life even as it entered yours.

Watch over your child's soul when these wild, uncomprehended impulses awake in their gigantic force and overwhelming power.

The secret of sex is the touchstone by which we may know a parent's nature. Most parents, perhaps, allow their child to enter all unprepared into the most momentous time of his life.

Here too, fortunately, Nature is far more sensible than parents, and lets the rising flood of life creep up by stages extending over several years. Yet she does expect man to honour it with a word in his own language, even as she does in hers.

That is clearly shown by the essential differences between the sexual life of human beings and of the lower animals. In the latter the instinct awakens in due season and then slumbers again. In their young, too, sexual development varies from that of the young human being. The animal is suddenly filled by the instinct, and the complete power to fulfil it, and thus without further trouble leaves childhood and immaturity behind. Then he again forgets the storm that has raged through his being.

Not so man ; he never forgets. His impulses are ever present and ready, scarcely subdued before they rise again from their dreams, gigantic as ever. It is better so ; strong impulses mean strength in will, in thought, in love. It is the strongest natures that have the hardest fight with sexual impulses.

From the tenth year on, the first stirrings of sex-impulse may be expected in the child. Once full development is reached, every year's delay in their fulfilment is a gain. There is no doubt to-day in any quarter that the longer the exercise of sexual functions can be deferred the better. These instincts die down gradually, but only with

total abstention. Without this they remain active longer than is generally believed.

Progress in civilisation has brought about a material diminution of the usual age of sex-development. Amongst the Greeks, influential leaders of thought still declared that a child born before his father had attained the age of thirty ought really to be accounted illegitimate. But the age is markedly lower with us ; so much the more firmly must we adhere to the principle for both sexes : better too late than too soon.

Two facts stand out beyond all doubt. First, that, generally speaking, his destiny endows your child with the right to exercise, to the full, his sexual functions at his own time and on his own responsibility. That is his right in life ; whether he makes use of this right or not must be left solely to his own option.

Second, after the child's tenth year you must be prepared to see in both sexes the first signs of sexual instincts. Hence it follows, as an unavoidable necessity, that, at the fitting moment, you should say a word of explanation and advice to your child.

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And yet many neglect to do this.

I have always seen and heard that parents account it their duty to say a serious word to their children when they marry. Doubtless they have the right to do so. But how does it come to pass that their lips have been closed as to the mystery of sex? A parent who has kept silence concerning the great change, brought about in mind and body by this most powerful of all instincts, need not be

surprised if his advice is not asked when marriage is contemplated.

There is nothing else for it, you must speak ; that is your most sacred as well as your most precious duty. In the whole period of growing childhood I know no time that offers such opportunity for mutual confidence as that of the unveiling of this mystery. It will be a pure and serious moment, that the child will remember all his life long, when his father or mother give him their confidence on this point.

If not they, then who else is to do it? Most certainly precocious school-fellows will undertake the task. But how? Whoever has gone through it, thinks with horror of that hour of impure desecration when obscene whispers revealed to us forbidden, repulsive secrets that exposed those dearest and most revered to us in a low and vulgar light. We felt like accomplices of the secret deed of shame, in which ear and eye had discovered the elders, hitherto so apparently deserving of our respect.

This hour, moreover, did not see the end of it. For before a child had managed to accustom his mind to the horrible fact, he all at once understood the significance of the obscenity which was hidden from him before, and, from that moment, his whole mind is poisoned in the most deadly manner, and his inner passion often finds an outlet in some fatal way. To-day vulgarity meets him everywhere, and from the moment of his enlightenment, the child learns to understand its meaning ; obliging companions, moreover, will always come to his help if needed.

Are you willing to expose your defenceless child

to this experience? Or do you intend in foolish delusion to keep him shut away from wrong influences? You will not succeed, never can indeed.

I distinctly remember how curiosity was first awakened in me. It happened at church. Our vicar was in the habit of reading out every Sunday the list of births in the parish. Then he would add, in a sepulchral tone, that such and such an illegitimate child had been born as well. Then followed regularly a penitential prayer for fallen youth. As a result, I asked what this all meant. But no one would tell me more than that I should not understand. So I longed and longed to reach an age when everything could be understood. Then I went to a public day-school and asked one of the bigger boys about the mystery of illegitimate children, for I was firmly convinced that they must have an entirely different origin from that of legitimate offspring. Or else our good vicar—who had about seventeen of his own—would not have needed that sepulchral tone.

The boy asked me with some surprise what class I was in. "Oh well," he said when I told him, "then I don't need to explain; you'll know all about it within a fortnight." And I heard it, in all the low vulgarity characteristic of precocious urchins.

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And now bethink yourself: it lies in your power to turn such things, these base experiences into something pure and sacred, but in yours of all the world alone. Have you no care for your child's soul?

I cannot feel convinced that it is right—as has

been recently proposed and practised—to leave this duty to the teacher or doctor. The most important point is to forestall the undesirable enlightenment before it has a chance to make the whole matter horrible to the child. Neither teacher nor doctor can accurately gauge the fitting moment ; only a father or mother can do this. Teachers and doctors have their special place, at a later age, when sexual processes can be explained and emphasised from the standpoint of natural history. Then either teacher or doctor, or both, can give much needed and valuable help, help beyond a parent's power as a rule. But all parents should see that the first word is theirs, and theirs only.

This is much more important than you imagine. In the first place, your child will consider and value your communication as an unheard-of confidence ; and nothing does human nature value so greatly, or respond to so readily, as confidence.

Then, too, something has been made clear between you two, that will have the most wide-spreading influence through all after-life. Your child now knows that there will never be any secret that you will hide from him. The whole world may hide and deceive, but his father and mother never ! Thus a point of resistance is formed strong enough to withstand every attack.

By this means, too, generally speaking, your child will be more disposed to give his confidence. If some unexplained secret casts its shadow between you, do not be surprised if your child takes his confidence to other quarters, where plain speaking may be expected. Rest assured your child will never reveal his innermost feelings to you, if you keep silence on this one point.

And how many dangers threaten the young body and mind from the awakening sex-instinct, dangers that would so easily be avoided if unbounded confidence existed between parent and child. But if this is to be, the parent must lead the way.

After all, children have a right to know unconditionally all that refers to their parentage. They must grow up gradually to such revelations, just as they grow up into the gradual use of their parents' worldly possessions. They must know too their parents' opinions in religious matters—in a word, they must have their parents' full confidence, if they are to give theirs in return.

Thus you stand before the closed door of your child's heart, stand with key in hand. Will you open?

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But you cannot speak to your child about matters of sex? Why not, I ask? Because you are prudish and full of false modesty—a very bad sign, for prudishness is always the veil of a common mind. So let your child teach you truth and honesty, that there may be no secrets of any kind between you.

When are you to speak? You will easily find the right moment. In any case, you must forestall his school-fellows. It is impossible to give a fixed rule, but Nature shows the time, and if you stand on a right footing with your child, you will know, without other help, when it has come.

And how shall you do it? Very simply; you really know best yourself. Connect it with the sex-life in plants, or your house cat; with the inevitable pet dog and her family of puppies, or

the coming of a new-born baby ; with a sheet of anatomical plates, or the questions that a thoughtful child asks in all innocence. If you give evasive answers then, or even say, you won't understand that yet—then you will awaken your child's slumbering curiosity and leave him a prey to common vulgar minds.

Consider that his young body gives its own message, and that the facts which he wants explained cannot be hidden. Honour therefore his questions with unlimited candour and with truth upon your tongue. You will never regret it, and thereby will, perhaps, save the soul you hold most dear from the fires of destruction.

A seer of old once said that man's future would reach its splendour when the hearts of the children should be turned to the fathers. But that can only be when the hearts of the fathers turn and open to the children. The surest test as to whether all is right is the secret of sex.

Two things clearly show how far parents are worthy of their calling : obedience firmly established before the child's sixth year, and frankness in matters of sex after his tenth. Both these questions are the most decisive in the whole of human life.

SICK CHILDREN.

That the great majority of our children come to this world in wonderfully good health is shown with striking uniformity in all birth records. There are, fortunately, still some people left who avoid the bad taste of proclaiming their family affairs in the columns of the public newspapers, yet even

in their case we hear of the birth of none but healthy children.

Yet these children are no sooner in the hands of their guardians than the ailments begin. This gives food for thought. Most people, in any case, do not know how to manage children, and it is remarkable how few girls try to learn. It is not, by any means, so easy to hold, dress, and otherwise care for a new-born baby. Every woman should have some practical knowledge of the main principles of child-nursing before she has children of her own.

Much of the illness in childhood, however, is not the result only of the nurses' ignorance and want of care, but is also due to the general nature of human development.

A lower animal is fully developed at birth, and only needs to complete its growth, which it manages to do in the shortest possible time. Man, however, is not fully developed, and needs many years to pass through those stages of growth, some of which thousands of years hence may possibly be transferred to the mother's womb. Such a thing is conceivable.

We might also make the matter clearer by saying: there comes into the world a living creature that grows at last into a real human being after development, lasting from its sixth week to the end of many years.

We have already seen that this slow human growth is a hurried passing through those stages of development that man has traversed in the long course of ages.

Hence it is that children are so delicate and exposed to all possible attacks of illness, because

they have not yet quite accommodated themselves to our present stage of civilisation. Hence, too, most of us do not understand how to manage them rightly.

But as is agreed by all human records, it is quite certain that, in earlier ages, men were stronger, healthier, and more long-lived than they are to-day. Consequently childhood which represents those periods shows more vital resistance than any other age.

Thus we see that children are endangered by our ignorance and want of understanding of their stages of growth ; but that their superior powers of resistance strengthen them against disease.

We must therefore, as a rule, expect, on the one hand, a high rate of mortality amongst children, and, on the other, a wonderful power of resistance to severe illness.

And such is really the case. Many of them die, so that mothers often bring up astonishingly few. Yet, again, many show a vital resistance that is quite amazing.

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If your child falls ill, put your main trust in that inner strength, of which there is more in his little body than in any adult's. Above all, be quite calm, and do not weep and wail over your child ; allow no anxious thought-waves to pass from you to your child, rather let your calm envelop him as he lies in your arms, for you are the only refuge for his troubled soul. But if you send out nothing but anxious fears, they will make themselves felt by his sensitive nature, and make things worse than need be.

If you are plainly unfit to look after your child, then engage a nurse who will take the matter more calmly. It is better for the child ; but then, you must not expect him to turn to you in good days, if you fail him in the evil.

In case of illness it is best to call the doctor in, only when you have succeeded in looking at the matter calmly and feel you need more advice. Every doctor knows how his treatment is furthered by a watchful mother who, day and night, nurses her child with all possible care. *He* sees it for moments only, *you* are the power that never leaves it.

The greatest help is to be found in the strength of natural forces, not in physician or apothecary. We brought up our children in a district where medical help was practically unobtainable, and managed excellently, in spite of cases of severe illness. It needs, of course, inner strength and the utmost spiritual effort. But these are needed in any case, and—the children are worth it.

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Illness generally falls upon our children suddenly and attacks them like a strong man armed. All that is amiss in the little body is burnt out in fever's raging fire.

Children, in this condition of boiling heat, cannot catch cold, so, above all, open the windows day and night—even in winter—and do not increase their bodily heat by feather pillows and warm blankets ; they need to be cooled, not heated.

When the fever runs highest, especially towards evening, warm baths bring down the inward heat in a wonderful way ; wet compresses often draw

out all mischief, and, as a rule, we can quickly conquer the physical upset.

Food sends up the temperatures, so fasting is the best means of bringing it down. It will not hurt your child at all if he gets nothing to eat as long as he is feverish. As soon as convalescence begins, the little patient will amply make up for all he has missed.

The chief thing, however, is mental calm, self-control and kindness in his nurses. Under such protection as that, Nature carries out her healing work with amazing ease.

Teething is an illness often greatly feared, and not without reason. Whilst the first teeth are coming the whole nature of the young body undergoes a change. Mental changes and progress are no less pronounced at this time, for it must make a great difference to any creature whether it can only suck or use its teeth to eat as well.

It is therefore no wonder if this great bodily change has the most far-reaching influence on the health of the young human being.

But do you rejoice rather than sorrow over your child's great step forward. He knows nothing of it, and frets over his physical pain, but you ought to know that a great thing is happening before your eyes ; so watch over his pain with happy patience. It is a long, hard time for you, but your affection is proved only when life is difficult and but binds more closely the tie between mother and child.

But if, in spite of all, slow insidious after-effects follow to darken your nursery, yet never lose heart. A childish body can struggle through the hardest things by dint of the natural strength within him.

The tree of life with its healing leaves and fruits is very near your child to-day, and has many a good gift in store for him—many more than doctor and chemist. Only be careful to put no hindrance in the way ; let Nature take her time, and do not spoil her wonderful workings by any unwise interference.

Children recover where no grown-up would. Measles, scarlet fever, pneumonia, and such-like visitants are fatal for adults, but passing ailments for children. When they lose their teeth they quickly make fresh ones, which is beyond the power of all their elders.

Rather, then, watch with silent admiration the working of a child's natural forces, and tend your sick child with calm and earnest devotion.

It is in times of sickness that ties of greatest tenderness are woven between mother and child. You see the path to your child's soul leads through his body.

IV

THE CHILD AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

"He who despises the world despises God, for it is the manifestation of Him."

WHY CHILDREN ARE HERE.

WHO children are we do not know. But we have some idea why they are here. They are in the world to do something for the world ; we therefore must train them for this calling and help them to fulfil it.

It is true we do not know, or, at any rate, not fully, what the world is. The term is used for an idea of such infinite significance, that our mental powers are not sufficient to grasp it in its entirety. We may, however, assume that our planet is a necessary part of some great whole, a tiny "world-cell," so to speak, and we are able to form fairly clear ideas of the tasks lying nearest to our hand on this planet of ours.

We have at last learnt that we find ourselves in a state of slowly advancing progress, and this gives every creature on the earth definite tasks which, consciously or unconsciously, he is bound to perform.

We may enunciate the principle that the more simply any creature assumes the duty nearest to his

hand, the more far-reaching will be the result and influence of his life, whilst the more the nearest duty is neglected to follow some distant aim, the less effective will his work be.

That is a vital truth, as irrefutable as it is inspiring. It shows us that to be of use we do not need any comprehensive understanding of the universe or even of our own life, but simply have to fulfil the work that lies nearest to our hand. By so doing, we render the greatest service to the whole world, and bring about the most valuable and certain advance in development.

Hence it comes about, no doubt, that the whole lower creation, as well as plants and animals, fulfil their work and destinies, for to these they are bound with no power to resist, whilst many human beings do not fulfil their vocation because the possibility of evading it has not been denied them.

For man is a being with independent choice ; in that lies his infinite happiness, and no less his greatest woe. All progress—and all failure—has its origin in the human mind and consciousness.

Doubtless, there are many parents who do not know their exact place and purpose in the great scheme of the Universe, and of them their fellows say : they have mistaken their vocation. This, maybe, is the fate of the greater half of humanity, for most people only come after much struggle and delay—perhaps even never—to the point where their inborn gift finds its scope in blissful activity.

But, in accord with the law of the nearest duty, every father and mother may know that their most important and weighty duties lie in the service and care of their children.

Perhaps we have done the most useful work of

THE CHILD AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD 97

all for the world if, at least, we guide our children to find their true vocation.

The child's soul is ready to join the world without question, and the world, great, immense though it be, has need of this gift. From the very first we see in every child variety of form, varying features and limbs ; hence then, too, variation in soul and spirit, a variation so marked as to demand difference in vocation. Each must have individual work, since each has individual characteristics of body and soul.

Parents therefore have laid upon them the duty of exercising constant, watchful attention, demanding never ceasing self-forgetfulness. Possibly you have missed your own vocation, and have now to see that your child escapes the same fate. But he is not in the least like you. How will you guide him?

One thing is quite certain. The chief value of life is work ; through work alone do we gain joy, strength, confidence, and happiness. No one can be happy without work ; indeed, the more serious and the harder it is, the greater life's ultimate happiness.

So teach your child to love work ; he will need it badly enough, if not for livelihood, at any rate for life.

The question only remains how you do this and what work you teach.

In this respect many parents are quite senseless ; in fact, I believe that parents, as a rule, are not very wise here, but *you* must be. At any rate, let us consider the matter together a little.

A child is an independent human being with rights and powers equal to yours. Under no cir-

cumstances, then, must we make him into the tool of our ambition. He does not belong to us, but to himself.

Many parents ardently desire to raise their children to a higher position than their own. No special objection can be raised against this, provided their efforts are carried through with moderation and a little intelligence.

But far the greatest number of mistaken callings have been due to parental ambition. Children had, above all, to make some show in the world, and all they showed was what they could not accomplish, since it was only what their parents wanted.

Then, of course, they came to grief, which was in itself a mercy, or else the unnatural life would have spread and spread in ever-wider circles. For every human being who has missed his calling drags a number of others into his own misery.

It is always better for a child to fall short of the social position possible to him than to go beyond it. At the present time, chiefly as the result of perverted ambition, all the so-called higher vocations are overfilled, whilst the lower—again so-called—are in great need of capable workers. Parental ambition has contributed not a little to the growing discontent in the world. Yet happiness in life lies in contentment, whilst ambition is but a gnawing misery.

The question, as a whole, must be looked at quite differently. We ought to notice very carefully what power lies in our child and try to develop that.

I harbour the hope that the foolish idea is, at last, dying out, that every child is a clean sheet, on which parents and teachers may write what they

choose. This is not a fact. A child comes into the world with his spirit complete and already stamped with its own individuality. Our task is to observe what lies within him, and help it to find expression. The question then is never: What shall I make of you? but always: What are you and what can you become? We are here only as the children's helpers, never as their tyrants.

To have children means to renounce, not to possess. Only the parent who is willing to give up his own desires, for their sake, will possess all that lies in their power to give—their love and confidence.

Many children possess a pronounced liking and ability for a special form of work which is easily recognised. In others it is a very difficult matter, and then the only thing to do is to watch attentively and to leave open the choice of all possible callings as long as may be.

An absolutely free choice of work, however, is only possible in the rarest of cases. Very often, as in a family, a child gets pushed into some special calling. In such circumstances it is always well to take the nearest work, and only to follow a different path where there is evidence of marked aversion combined with ability in other directions.

Always take up the work nearest at hand, no less for your child than for yourself. The law of the nearest work is deeply rooted in natural law, and is more far reaching than most people think.

Still, be sure that it is real work. Only he who really works can have true liberty. It is not money or possession, but serious work alone that gives to any man his independence.

And, if you wish to train your child to work,

beware of being idle yourself. We shall not achieve much with words, but only by example. A child that has always seen industry in his home will scarcely turn out an idler. Only what we do in our children's presence and with them leaves indelible traces on their characters.

To sum up, then, children are not here for us, but for the world ; they bring their vocation with them, the calling to their proper work ; this they will best hear when they see diligence in us.

PLAY.

Play is serious earnest in childhood ; the most valuable work a child performs is play.

Many people heed this far too little ; they think a child cannot be saddled too soon with what they call work. And what is this work? Only something that brings in money.

But it is the lowest and often least valuable work in life that is paid for in coin. For instance, what great and hard work suffering is ; yet no one pays the sufferer. Indeed, he may be thankful, if people do not grumble at him. Then, too, for no great thoughts or spiritual progress is there any money recompense. As a general rule, wage-earners are only the ordinary workers who make the thoughts and discoveries of great minds available for the multitude.

Children's games are very serious forms of work ; it is true they neither cost nor gain any money, yet they are of the deepest significance in the development of the next generation.

Play is an echo of the practice of Art at some definite stage of human development. It is the

form of industry of far bygone races which is revived in the child. That is what gives to play its infinite value and importance. In play, too, we have the clearest revelation of the child's innate capacities.

Always, therefore, get to know the nature of your child's play, and let your first attention be turned to his games; this will save you from many a mistake later on.

No one should ever despise or laugh at any game of the child's own invention, but rather treat it seriously and with sympathetic understanding.

Remember, the children are creators, and their games are the evidence of free and thoughtful minds. After all, will you ever make any happier or more pleasing discoveries in them? They will certainly outgrow this stage of childish imperfection, and that too very soon, but in their early, inventive gifts they have shown you the paths to be followed in the future.

Nor should they ever be disturbed in their play. Games are the first seed-leaves, the cotyledons of life's earnest. If these first leaves die, no plant can grow, and children, hindered in their play, will not easily become fit for serious work.

What, I wonder, do parents say when they are ruthlessly interrupted in their own work or occupation?

Some of them show a very unpleasant side. Yet it is a parent's duty to put up with interruption from thoughtless children without losing patience. Children can only be trained by endless care to respect other people's occupations. But that is all the more reason why we should respect theirs.

Nevertheless, if we must interrupt them, let it

be done with every consideration and an apology. If then they are still not able to tear themselves away quickly, do not wake them from their dreams with reproof, but with all the kindliness at your command. Remember, too, with pleasure that the more eagerly your child plays, the more eagerly will he work in after-years.

The child's passions too are shown already in his early play, and here you must not delay to keep your attention awake, for you must be able to tell where play degenerates into passion, and skilfully and cautiously interfere to direct the fiery ardour into another channel. It is so easy to divert a child's mind, and, as a rule, the diversion is enough to quench the rising flame.

But outbursts of passion need very careful, patient handling ; it is bad for children to flare up often. Even in his games, the child must begin to tread the path of self-control.

The nature and kind of our children's playthings is another point of great importance.

Our toyshops are inexhaustible in their supplies. But if you have a child of your own you perhaps already know that there is nothing very suitable to be found amongst them.

Toyshops are for uncles and aunts, coming to visit the family and remembering, at the last moment, that they really must take something for the children. When the giver has no right ideas about toys, then the gay shop comes in most conveniently.

The best toys are those the child makes for himself, and fortunate indeed are the children who can play about in gardens, woods, and fields. They need no toys, or, if they do, a couple of bits of wood

make just as valuable a plaything as anything of a more fragile and expensive nature. A rag doll with inked-in features may often give as much pleasure as the most expensive waxen creature with the face of an angel, or a doll so made that it can cry for three days at any rate. Its bellows do not hold out any longer as a rule.

A toy that is a source of never-ending, ever-fresh delight is the father's waste-paper basket, especially if a pair of scissors is provided as well—small ones with rounded points.

In my experience, extending over many years, the paper-basket never fails to soothe and delight. There is not a more valuable object in any home, all through life, than a paper-basket, and in the care of children this—their elders' place of oblivion—is the most attractive of playthings. It is also quite a good plan to drop a sweet into it now and again, as well as a piece or two of string, a pencil, or coloured crayon—then you may rest assured nothing in the room will be more attractive and interesting. The paper-basket is indeed mankind's most faithful friend, indispensable from the first stage of life to the last.

Why do children play? As an outlet for inner energy. Their games are their first attempts at work; consequently their tools ought to be such as they can use to make something by themselves, quite simple therefore, quite unbreakable, with plenty of space for the childish creations. It is the making, not the finished effort, that calls forth thought and creative power.

Is it not the same with us ourselves? What gives us most pleasure in life? Surely what gives most scope for our power and ability, the environ-

ment we have made for ourselves by our own mental efforts. Our children have just such feelings as ours, only they appear in childish, primitive forms, uninfluenced by the metallic standards current amongst their elders.

Thus a toy can scarcely be simple enough, and the occupation it gives the child should be a constant impetus to fresh thought and creative activity.

With such views as these we will visit the gay toyshop once more. There are festivals in life when we need its help as well.

Festivals in themselves betoken the childish stages of human development. Whenever man's mind found life too hard, he had to be refreshed with some festal celebration. These feasts signify the most valuable resting-places of bygone stages of development. A place therefore must always be found for them in the children's lives. If even adults think they cannot do without them, they are certainly indispensable for the younger generation.

So no birthday treat must ever be forgotten, least of all that birthday for children everywhere, the happy Christmas feast. Parents' birthdays may easily be dispensed with, but children's never!

Remember Easter, too, if possible, and see it does not come without its treasured eggs.

All these festivals need not mean great expense, for joy does not depend entirely on money; fortunately it is still true that "for gold it is not sold."

But if even a modest outlay is beyond your means at the present price of food, and with the steady increase in your family, then make a compact with the older children that birthdays are only

to be celebrated till about the seventh year. They will understand and find all the more enjoyment in the treats for the younger ones.

After all, there is nothing more delightful than a birthday morning that dawns suddenly with its big cake and little group of candles, to the never-ending joy of some little human being, too young to have foreseen its approach. Or that Christmas feast after weeks of budding expectations and hopes fixed on undreamt-of delights.

Well, on such occasions let us go into the shop and prepare to enjoy our holiday frame of mind. Nor need we greatly regret that its stock, as a rule, does not last out over the holiday. Our children must provide for everyday needs themselves, and this they are quite able to do.

Most valuable of all are the boxes of bricks ; unfortunately, modern times have produced in this class of toy very expensive, elaborate, and breakable works of art ; moreover, they are too small as a rule. The honest, old box of bricks was very big, and filled with very strong, wooden blocks of varying lengths, but all right-angled and of the same thickness. Your carpenter perhaps would make you one to order, only it must be big and able to bear knocking about. The growing mind can find most occupation with a box like that.

For girls, a doll will always be the best plaything. Even in the Pyramids the ancient doll was found as the toy that had accompanied its mistress to the tomb.

The doll is peculiarly fitted to develop silently a feminine turn of mind. The value of the doll, however, falls almost at the same rate as its price increases. So stick to the cheaper ones.

Third in my list comes the picture-book. The present day generation must get accustomed to the use of books, their own too, not borrowed goods. From the first, a child should learn that borrowing books is appropriation of someone else's mental possessions.

We have no lack of childish literature, but few children's books ; this literature aims rather at the approval of those who buy than of those who use it. Demand, at any rate in the picture-books, clearness of outline and, if possible, colour as well ; choose with your mind on your child and his growth. If you look for books to suit the child you will certainly not go wrong.

Whatever else you add in the way of brightness may be left to your own choice—perhaps an india-rubber ball, a whip, top, or something useful of that kind. In confidence I may tell you in my own home I ruled out all musical instruments of torture. But if you have strong nerves, then decide on drums, whistles and trumpets.

Generally speaking, we notice that most play-things delight the grown-ups more than the children, and anyone with older sons and daughters will observe that they play more with the new toy than do the little ones themselves. A silent judgment is thus given over the value of the goods.

A short time ago I saw in a certain home a splendid steamboat. It had a real engine heated by methylated spirit, and could cross the lake by its own steam. The children begged us to set it going, as it was beyond them. But their interest was exhausted long before we had managed it. They were fishing old bottles out of the lake with

sticks and making a great splashing with the water. The steamer and its clever engine they had entirely forgotten.

So save yourself the expense of dear and elaborate works of art. Joy is a divine messenger, but the sign of the divine is simplicity. Pure joy cannot be had for money, and if, sometimes, it may need instruments, it always chooses the cheapest. With children, become a child!

LIFE IN THE FAMILY.

The child's choicest inheritance, and at the same time the most favourable soil for the young soul's development, is a happy family life. Life has no society to offer nearly as valuable as this.

Whoever has had an unhappy childhood has missed this family life. Poverty does not bring sorrow nor riches joy, but dispeace in the home casts a shadow of unhappiness over all young life.

It would be better to give facilities for the dissolution of unhappy marriages—evils that will always exist—than that their almost inextricable bonds should be continued from a misunderstanding of isolated Bible texts,¹ and homes become an ever-flowing source of poison for the lives of the children growing up there.

If parents cannot get on well together—and this is a matter that cannot be forced—one of them at least should make it his steady aim to bring sunshine into the lives of the children whilst they are still young; a cold bleak spring often ruins all the harvest.

¹ See on this point Lhotzky's *The Way to The Father*, pp. 372 seq.

The sunshine of which I speak comes without your conscious knowledge from your soul, when once you welcome it and serve your children to the best of your power. To serve is the privilege of higher minds, and the one essential of life, often indeed the only boon they ask of life. Such a higher soul you are, of course, for your child's by reason of the advantage you have over him in your greater maturity and experience. Serve your children then.

It is always a very bad sign when anyone is ready to serve strangers and neglects his own family—a frequent state of things unfortunately.

Such protective service, demanded naturally by children as a matter-of-course without the least feeling of gratitude in return, gives them the conscious feeling that any real pleasure is impossible without you. Young people should grow up with this feeling, and they will, without any special efforts, consideration or literary studies on your part, provided you look upon your service as natural and needing no explanation.

This will bring in its train three great advantages, that really make any special education unnecessary.

When we talk about children's training and urge its vital importance, there has been, generally speaking, from the very first something wrong, which has to be corrected—but seldom is—by our frenzy for training. As a rule there is no spirit of service, hence the fruits that invariably ripen under its influence fail, and have to be replaced by the artificial results of training.

I believe those who train best know nothing of training as such, but only pour forth, without

thought or question, their wealth of love, which is only happy when serving others.

The first advantage arising from a united family feeling—even though this is due to one of the parents only—is that you yourself—(how can I put it?)—that you yourself are saved from loneliness and growing old.

Few indeed understand the matter in its full significance. Your unfailing participation in the children's pleasures, even from their earliest years, has awakened in them the spontaneous idea that you yourself are the source of their happiness. So they will get into the habit of confiding to you their every experience, knowing, as they do, that you never look down upon them, but always treat them as equals.

You will then still be their friend and companion as they grow up, renewing your youth in theirs, and when life, as a rule, grows more lonely, you will not want for loving companionship.

Thus you will never grow old and lonely. If you play with them as their comrade, and in later years join in their tramps, so that they know their chief pleasure is gone when you are away, you will win for yourself a lifelong gift that abundantly makes up for all early sacrifices.

When they have grown into men and women who can draw comparisons between their childhood and that of others, with the full consciousness of their own life there will mingle a sense of gratitude, unknown indeed before, but steadily increasing, until it changes the grey days of old age into the bright sunshine of youth.

Many parents fail to grasp this advantage in the critical years ; then the young folk, in their active

lives, very quickly learn to do without them, look for other companions and intimate friends, so that when you most need them they are lost to you. If you then begin to bewail your loss, all they do is to bestow upon you, now and again, a little pittance of affection that does but give you a keener sense of poverty.

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The second advantage is that you can provide your children with a defence against any injustice and hardships of school.

It is a strange arrangement in our country that at the tender age when, as I hope, you have just brought the obedience question to a satisfactory conclusion, State officials should suddenly make their appearance at your door, and with stern hands seize upon your children to educate them.

But so things are. We will not now discuss the advantages or disadvantages of this curious procedure; moreover, it has certainly done much good. The well-known foolishness of parents has, no doubt, made it necessary as a kind of protection for the children, just as, when occasion demands, courts of law take possession of their property and manage it for them.

But it is quite certain—and this is acknowledged by all intelligent school authorities as well—that this compulsory public education should be supplemented by home-training. This lies in your hands. Even the best of form-masters cannot handle and care for your child as you can. Nor is that his business.

You must stand as intermediary—to supplement, to clear away difficulties and to reconcile differ-

ences. Some parents are furious when they think their children have been unjustly treated at school, a supposition founded only on very one-sided evidence. But because they cannot get at teachers and school authorities, they pour out, in private, their wrath and indignation, of course in their children's presence, and thus embitter a state of affairs which need not, under any circumstances, have been unbearable.

Now this is all wrong. You must use your efforts towards reconciliation, even when your child has plainly suffered injustice ; teach him to bear such hardships of life calmly and patiently. After all, teachers are generally not as foolish as they are made out ; certainly far less so than the average parent.

But if your child really feels misunderstood and harshly treated at school, offer him a refuge in your affection, where he can find rest and calm. You will see that those children do best in life who were not brilliant prodigies at school, if only they can have, as compensation, a resting-place at home for their soul.

The school, then, neither can nor will be entirely responsible for the whole education, but needs the help of your care to supplement, reconcile and protect.

And lastly comes the third advantage of a close family bond, and very important it is, namely : protection against playfellows.

No easy task this. The school itself seldom satisfies all childish desires ; there is something too harsh and serious about its atmosphere. Yet it offers the widest possibilities for choice of companionship. And this companionship, at least for

a time, easily supplies all that a child desires. But the companionship is not always quite desirable, and then the home must intervene with its protecting hand.

To protect only, not to forbid, to nag, to spy! The children are too big for that, and too independent in character; all that is possible is unseen protection and development, in the home, of the child's own standard of taste.

If your company—I will not say your home, for that is impossible in many cases—is a source of mental and spiritual comfort for the child, he will, from the first, have ready to hand a standard for his childish friendships. You will then be his best protection, even though you do not hear the children's private talk, and though he should make a mistake now and again. We all make mistakes, it is but human, so why not our children as well?

But they must always find us ready with a never-ending forgiveness that knows no limits—not even in the so-called family honour—and a refuge where they can forget the mistakes of the friendship and learn to estimate it rightly from a vital point of view.

You will only succeed in this service if, from the very first, you have opened your heart to your child. Yet, try with all the care and tenderness at your command, and rest assured that no noble service, undertaken with all your heart, ever falls fruitless to the ground. Happy is the child whose home is a place of peace and sanctity!

LIFE OUTSIDE THE HOME.

Any parent who is training his child for this life must give him, somehow or other, opportunity

of mixing with his fellows. This is for many no easy matter, for social life offers not only much that is good, but also an infinite amount of difficulty and bitterness.

Social life and school life begin together, and your child is yours, and yours alone, only until his school education begins. From that time on he will find an increasing sphere of activity amongst his fellows outside the home, and you will make a great mistake if you allow false ideas of affection or any other selfish reasons to put barriers in his way. Those who strive to keep their children for themselves will certainly lose them, whilst those who give them up will keep them.

You see, then, how important it is for you to do your utmost for the soul of your child before he passes out over the threshold of the home. The obedience question should be quite settled by then, and a good beginning made in independence and adaptability to environment.

But from the very first moment, when the waves of social life begin to break about the child's feet, there is great need for watchful care on your part.

Many children are remarkably easily influenced, swayed by every outside impression ; such children need very careful checking, if they are not to become unbalanced. But that does not mean shutting them up. There is nothing in life that a child has not a right to learn by degrees, but he should never be left to feel the want of a word as to the value or worthlessness of anything human.

Such a word should come from your lips rather than from any others, so it is your duty to exercise the greatest watchfulness over all that touches your child. You will have his full confidence provided

you have settled that question of obedience in the right way.

In this case your decision will be final for your child, or, at any rate, of very great weight, hence you must see that it is no hasty one.

The more calm and dispassionate your judgment in all contingencies, the greater the sense of security that you will awaken in your impressionable child, and there is nothing he needs more than a strong support.

In other cases, however, you may need to use the same care to induce a child to join in social life. I do not think it desirable for children to have no intercourse with outside friends, and to be perfect models of domesticity. Such children run a risk in later years of feeling very awkward in society.

Our aim should always be to find our vocation and work in the world, whilst maintaining our inner independence of it. But those who refuse all intercourse with the world will not find it easy to do anything useful in it.

We have had, from time to time in this world, intellects of great worth who were lost to human society because they could not accommodate themselves to it ; this was as much to be deplored as if they had been ruined by society. In this matter you can be a real help to your child.

So encourage your growing children in their friendships as far as ever these seem of value to them.

In their social life they will meet with many a danger. The first I will mention is : stimulants. I assume that you have brought up your children entirely without stimulants ; fortunately this is

nowadays so in accord with the views of every branch of the medical profession, that such an assumption is justified.

It does not matter either if you yourself are not averse to the moderate enjoyment of alcohol—I would not force anyone to total abstinence any more than I would permit any limitation of my own freedom of action.

If, however, you have brought up your child without alcohol, he will, without any prompting, prefer strict moderation in society. You will not find it the least necessary to urge total abstinence upon your young people, but can allow them the independence of action to which their age entitles them. Only note that a body, still not fully developed, is better without any stimulants, and that alcohol has a special tendency to promote a premature development of sex-instincts ; so beware.

As regards smoking, I think it best to give absolute freedom of action, but not to provide tobacco or money to buy it. Such expenses a lad should meet by his own efforts.

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The most important experience that a child makes in social life is one destined to play the greatest part in later life, viz., affection for others.

The time up to his sixth year is one of the Self only, but the coming of the second teeth sees the entrance into the life of altruistic feeling. This is a more lengthy period, for such feelings accompany us until we lose our teeth, and then, let us hope, brighten the evening of our days.

Before the appearance of the last double teeth—the so-called wisdom teeth—your child will have

felt the stirring of love in some form or other. He was, we will hope, not entirely unprepared. You will have explained sexual relations to him, and thus made it possible for him to give you his confidence, since he will greatly need your help at this time.

Your explanation, of course, was only an outline sketch ; life will paint the picture, and that without your assistance.

Generally speaking, love comes, at first, very innocently in the harmless form of friendship for one of his own sex.

Your children's friendships are of importance, for they show you the direction in which their minds turn, and more than anything enable you to gauge the depth of affection of which they are capable.

Very few people can love deeply. If we could institute a reliable test of love capacity and mark the highest degree by ten, let us say, the average human being would register a capacity of about three, a few only would rise above six or seven, and the mass of mankind would sink towards zero. This observation has no scientific value, but is only founded on my personal experience, extending over some fifty years.

There is, however, a great difference between depth and quickness of affection ; in fact they stand as a rule in inverse ratio to each other. The quicker the blaze, the less intensity of fire!

It is important you should get a fairly just estimate of your child's nature, and this you can do in his friendships.

Friendships are—quite unconsciously of course—silent expressions of sex-instinct, which does not, as yet, reach out beyond the limits of the same sex.

For that reason they are an important indication of emotional development, and worthy of most careful note. You should never interfere with them, but keep in reserve some diversion that may cool them down should their fever run all too high.

Youth must go through its experiences, even bitter ones, entirely alone. We are not here to lift these from the young folks' shoulders, for we cannot live their lives for them. Yet we must always stand by with ready help, as their super-friends above the heat of battle, their last refuge with ever open doors.

Marriage, as a rule, puts an end to the friendship typical of youth. This is only natural, and therefore not to be regretted. What in later life is called friendship is scarcely anything more than a certain community of interests and ideas, as a rule entirely lacking in depth. Only a few very choice exceptions are capable of a friendship of the heart and mind. Of this, then, there is no occasion to speak here.

The real object of your child's unconscious desire and striving is to be found in the opposite sex, so that these youthful years are decisive, dangerous, and therefore delightful.

It is well if you have so arranged matters that both sexes are represented amongst your children. But if not, be all the more careful not to shut up your child away from the love which is already waiting and sure to come in the future. Yet keep a careful watch, and be your child's sure defence and protector.

The problems, as you see, grow ever greater and more difficult, but they will not be beyond your

power if you have solved the very first—the question of obedience.

If that was not brought to a successful issue in due season, then certainly you will be pushed on one side in this anxious time of suspense, but in that case your child can probably manage for himself fairly well. Try then, as far as possible, not to show want of understanding or obstinacy, so that he may find at least refuge with you, should he want or seek for it.

Occasions when the young folk can meet and admire one another should not be avoided, but utilised as far as position and circumstances allow.

Yet age and experience should not let the reins drop entirely from their hands, and if in these matters there arise signs of overwhelming passion, have some diversion ready for any emergency—a change of air of some kind or travel. Travelling is a costly business, we know, but is cheap in comparison with your child's soul.

A mother once came to me in utmost despair over an all-consuming passion in her eighteen-year-old daughter. I advised a long journey. She went, and was away for two months, three, and at last even six months. But it was a complete cure. Later on she married someone else, and made an excellent wife and mother. Thank Heaven, she was capable of passionate love.

Your child will look for and find his love without any help, so beware of interfering in this matter. At his age, you did not care for help yourself. Still you must be there if he wants you. There must be no occasion in life when your love can possibly fail, not even if your child should

drag your so-called good name through the dust. Your real honour is, under all circumstances, to stand by your child. A parent who is capable of casting off his child is not fit to have one. Or do you put a higher value on the world's chattering tongues than you do upon the soul of your child?

FREEDOM.

Have you ever set yourself to consider what awaits your child when he grows up?

Many have hazy ideas of some calling, no matter what, provided it brings in a good income for their sons, and see visions of their daughters as capable wives in well-to-do comfortable circumstances, where they will be better off than their mothers were; children, too, they must have, of course—sunny-tempered darlings—for you will want grandchildren.

But this is day-dreaming, not consideration, and since you are no longer a child occupy your mind with plans rather than with dreams. Our children's future deserves our most earnest consideration for and with them, although its making rests in their hands alone.

I beg to put forward another proposal, which is entirely independent of the sex of your children: and that is to train them up to freedom.

Man is the only creature who can be free. Every animal and every plant can reach perfection, but freedom is for the human race alone. Freedom is our best defence in life, and the surest guarantee of advancement. Parents are but an uncertain protection, about which Nature troubles very little. She is not one whit disturbed if it so

chances that the mother dies in childbirth, hence you need not think that you are indispensable.

In a family with which I was acquainted, the mother died at the birth of her tenth child ; this was such a terrible shock to the father, a poor Government official, that he had to be taken at once to a lunatic asylum ; of money there was simply none. Yet every one of these children turned out very well without the help of any public charity, and not one failed to maintain the same social position as his parents had occupied. So evidently it can be done without you.

But not without an independent spirit, not without freedom. Human nature, when free, has within itself its own rule of life and standard, and will make its way under any circumstances.

But of two things you must be absolutely sure, so I do not hesitate to reiterate them once again. First, you must renounce all right of possession, and secondly, you must train your child for himself, for the self which in very truth is his. But before he can listen to the law of his own being, he must learn to listen to yours.

Freedom can only be the fruit of discipline, otherwise it is but licence that, unrestrained, proves its own destruction. The many unhappy ruined lives of to-day owe their misery, in the majority of cases, to lack of discipline.

Be very firm, therefore, with the little child whilst it is still learning to talk and walk, and teach it the meaning of discipline and of that higher power in the world, with which we may indeed co-operate, but never resist. By degrees, hold the reins less tightly, and more and more take the position of an equal and friend who tries to

understand and to make allowance for everything, even for mistakes. Educate the growing mind into a personal sense of duty and independent responsibility.

You can do it so simply, by accustoming it to the fulfilment of small home duties—even though they are the very smallest—such as feeding pets, neatness, cleanliness, use of money, etc.

Nothing pleases a child more than to help in his parents' occupations, and his sense of importance is increased by their appreciation, which, however, must not be in any way exaggerated. A child is still so naturally sensitive that any exaggeration, even of affection, is repulsive to him. He knows exactly, too, whether you mean it or are only pretending, and it is his nature to detest everything artificial or affected. The loss of this natural instinct is, as a rule, only an evil result of education. Still, your child's steadfastness should be rewarded, and the best as well, as the only real reward is increased confidence, which cannot be shaken even by childish mistakes.

You should not pass over all youthful folly without a word, but you must manage without nagging, foolish prohibitions and petty interference on every occasion.

Every wish and proposal on the child's part should always be taken seriously and carefully considered. If it is in any way feasible, give your consent, but do not hesitate to say "no" when necessary. Yes and no together help on progress in life ; either by itself is but a destructive force.

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Whatever may be the outward form in life that your child's independence is to assume, leave the

decision to him alone. Circumstances and environment play a great part here, as well as individual tastes and capabilities. In all this your share is only to advise, not to dictate ; moreover, the matter is not so important as most people think.

Bismarck once said to Battenberg, when he was called to the Bulgarian throne : " Some day it will be quite a pleasant memory to you to have been, for a time, Prince of Bulgaria."

Probably that is very much how we human beings will feel when we look back on our existence in this world. Life here will seem an interesting memory, whether our part, as the nursery rhyme has it, was :

" Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor " . . .

It is the purpose behind that matters. If you accustom your child to freedom, he will never come to grief in his calling, but will find his centre of gravity in his humanity, an inheritance that is eternal.

The matter is worthy of the most serious consideration. In every man, as in all the higher animals, there is a strong imitative instinct. It can be amazingly helpful in education, but must not be a resting-place, only a step to something better. Many, in every phase of their activity or thought, in words and gestures, are nothing but imitation incarnate. This is a very imperfect phase of character, to which we may well give the name of " aping."

Human power will only reach its highest point when it is born anew in us, and becomes a new creation through individual independence. Our own soul must find expression in everything, and

every outside thought, adopted by us, must be inwardly digested until it becomes a part of ourselves. If not, it only proves a weighty encumbrance, a fruitful cause of mental indigestion.

This must be our aim in the guidance of our children's souls. Every effort must be made to attain to life and spirit themselves, not to their outward form only, and initial and instinctive imitation must be utilised to reach independent action.

It is therefore not altogether a good sign when a man's outward appearance at once shows plainly his calling in life, either by a distinctive dress or unmistakable traces of his occupation in features or gestures. Such a man is certainly not free.

Most human beings are in like case ; and the age of true freedom has not yet come. I know it well, and no one longs for that time more than I. But at least you can see that you put no hindrance in the way of freedom.

Whenever I meet an educationist I always think to myself : if only you and your education may do no harm to Nature's sacred work ! But if I see that he really has theories of education, then I tremble more and more, both for him and his victims. Yet I will, once again, name the two pillars on which all human progress rests—disregard them at your mortal peril. The names of these pillars are :

OBEDIENCE AND FREEDOM.

THE CHILD AND KNOWLEDGE

"Knowledge is power."

WHEN SHALL WE BEGIN.

IN a well-ordered State all arrangements are made in advance for the future citizen and rate-payer, above all for the beginning of his mental training.

You must not, however, submit to this, as to a senseless State regulation, but give it your careful consideration.

Government departments, as a general rule, choose the sixth year in which to lay the foundation stone of all knowledge derived from books. This is doubtless the result of just observation.

The cutting of the second teeth is a sign of a deep-seated change in the child, not purely physical, of course, but affecting also the innermost fibres of his being. The change is naturally not so momentous as when the first teeth come. Consequently it is accomplished painlessly and without special dangers. The body has already reached a stage much nearer completion—yet the change is important enough to bring about something quite new to the child, the beginning of learning in earnest.

The question of obedience at home must be decided before the sixth year, but you will not fail to notice in your child's demeanour then a time of

boisterous activity that calls urgently for serious occupation other than childish play.

For many families, school is the solution of all kinds of domestic difficulty caused by a riotous child ready for instruction. Compulsory education is, at bottom, a kindly State provision, and really one of the most valuable objects of Government expenditure.

The development of different nations in the last four centuries will convince the most superficial of observers. There is a great difference between the progress of civilised nations, with and without compulsory school attendance, a difference so great that it is now decided to introduce it wherever it does not already exist.

Yet a State regulation cannot deal with individual cases ; you must, however, since your child's welfare is at stake.

There is no doubt that some children reach their sixth year before they are ready for school ; many are not then sufficiently developed either physically or mentally for such serious activity.

In such a case, try to obtain postponement of school attendance. The education authorities will doubtless listen to serious and courteous representations ; perhaps you could get a doctor to use his influence as well.

It is always better to begin school too late than too early. In human life, indeed, it is never permissible to say of anything " too late."

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The beginning of school is the first step in formal knowledge, and a very serious step it is.

Even if it is, at first, but a question of A B C,

it is knowledge just as much as anything that is learnt later on. It even seems to me that the most important part of school knowledge is that imparted by the excellent teachers of our elementary schools.

As the school doors open, the inexorable closing of the gate shuts out your child from the Paradise in which the law of his being would have granted a little longer sojourn; henceforth the angel's sword forbids his entrance.

School is one of the most important turning-points in life.

Even the relations between you and your child become entirely changed, unconsciously perhaps, yet irresistibly. The gentle smooth course of life continually increases its speed, at first with a gentle rippling, but ever hastening, until it rushes past like a mighty torrent. From the first day of school, you have to share your position of authority with others, and this is not always easy.

So do not make too much haste; if your means permit, begin the lessons at home very slowly, very patiently, very thoroughly. Let the transition be very easy from play to the first beginnings of life's work.

But it does not matter if you cannot afford this beginning at home. Send your child to school without hesitation. Human worth is never dependent on money—never! It is simply the result of our mental outlook.

I give you one warning only, and that gathered from my own experience. Do not begin too early. There are children so developed and mature at five years of age that they are all eagerness for school and learning; even four-year-olds often

try to pick up scraps of learning from the six-year-olds, and to spell their way together to the sacred books.

Many parents are delighted at this. That Lizzie is brighter than the neighbour's Freddy is only what they expected from the first. But to have it now proved as a fact that the much younger Lizzie can do as well as Freddy is indeed something to boast about. So it is blazoned abroad till the report even reaches Lizzie, who believes it, and grows as foolish as her worthy parents.

Poor Lizzie, to have to stand so much the sooner outside the closed gates of Paradise!

Precocity is never without its influence on later development. It requires very careful handling, if possible, with the advice of a sensible doctor. For it may only too easily be a symptom of brain trouble, and end in stupidity or something worse. To try to make a child precocious is nothing short of criminal.

Rather be glad if your child is late and slow in developing. Some men I know, whose slow development was a constant source of sorrow at school, yet in after-life they were amongst the most successful, whilst I have seen many model boys come to utter grief later on.

So do not begin any sooner than is absolutely necessary. We do not yoke up a foal to the cart nor break him in for a rider. Knowledge, however, is a full cart, and can be a very heavy rider. So watch over your child!

SCHOOL AND HOME.

From the moment when your child crosses the school threshold he is no longer in your hands

alone. If the obedience question was settled rightly you will always be able to speak a decisive word in his life, but if not, then the decision will henceforth come from another direction ; there is no getting away from this.

For the child it is now of the greatest importance that school and home should be at one. The same spirit of discipline and order, only in another form of life—that is what school should be.

It must also be remembered that teachers are people who devote their lives solely to the one aim of preparing young minds for their life-work. I believe I am not wrong in saying that the great majority of teachers have really been actuated by this high motive in the choice of their profession.

It is no trifle, probably, to devote one's whole life to the fulfilment of a noble thought. A man has but the one life, and to give that up is a sure proof of sincerity of purpose.

It is then no matter of surprise that some amongst the teaching profession have not kept very high ideals, and that many lack the strength of character to live up to this first noble thought. Youth, indeed, is willing, but may sometimes fall short in power of achievement.

The higher an aim, the more difficult its attainment, and the more likely to embitter those who feel their shortcomings and yet cannot follow any other path in life. Such are not wanting within the ranks of teachers. Yet, in spite of this, teaching is the most important and useful of all professions, even when practice falls short of ideals.

At any rate, no one takes up teaching from a desire to make money. Ample precautions have

been taken against this for the whole range of the profession, from Elementary School teacher to University lecturer. It is no credit to human society that this is so. If our views of life were more what they should be, the whole of society would be firmly convinced that every teacher should have entire freedom from any money anxieties. As a matter of fact, teachers should be far and away the best paid of officials, since we confide to their care our most precious possessions, the very best this world holds—our children.

With the teacher, then, you must share your authority over your child. The less jealousy you can feel, and the more frankly you can look upon this as a matter of course, the better for your child. It is his good you have in view, not your own profit or honour.

Nor is there anything that the whole teaching world more ardently desires than harmony between school and home. A teacher's position is one of extreme difficulty. The whole of his day's work—that in itself very exhausting—has to do with large numbers of young minds—all different, and by no means always easy to handle—minds too that offer all possible variations in capability, temperament, and response to discipline. In such a position it needs a great deal of real power to maintain one's authority, and to convert such numbers of diverse units into a well-ordered whole.

Moreover, all this difficult work has to be done between the Scylla and Charybdis of school committees, school inspectors, school authorities of all sorts on the one hand, and on the other the many-headed multitude of parents. If these two opposite forces are not in some degree at one, even the

best of teachers can do nothing. School-work and school-children can only prosper in unbroken peace.

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Try therefore to put yourself entirely into the place of teachers, to whom the State hands over its children, and for your part do everything that is possible to make matters easier.

Also put yourself entirely into your child's place ; henceforth, during the most important hours of the day, he will be under the care of people who, by education, position, and no doubt other qualities as well, are likely to make the deepest and most lasting impression upon him.

Since children know, or at least have a distinct idea of, everything that happens in their mental environment, they feel with keen pain the contrast between school and home.

What a terrible sense of dislocation falls upon the young soul when a choice has to be made between these two ruling powers—both of which the child would gladly love—a feeling that must be experienced to be understood.

Try to remember your own young days, and live again with your child what you yourself experienced. Give him a helping hand in these trials, and see that, if they must come, they shall do so as late as possible.

In very early school-days the sense of difference between school and home can almost always be averted.

Any attempt to reconcile differences, however, must not be expected from the teachers, but come from the home. The teacher has to manage a difficult number, the home but one individual.

It is also quite certain that a courteous, serious word from the home will meet with the most ready attention and action on the part of the teacher. But if this cannot be managed, or if, contrary to expectation, your suggestions meet with anything but a cordial reception, at any rate keep your difference of opinion locked in your own breast. Even there your child will sense it, for, by degrees, he notices all the ripples that cross your mind. But, at any rate, for the time being, the matter blows over without any cruel injury to natural childish feelings.

Under no circumstances should there be any criticism of teachers' actions or personality in the presence of the child, or indeed of any considerable number of the family circle. Such criticism may often enough act as a veritable poison to your child's soul in his own home, the place of peace and kindly care.

Would you ever drop poison into the dishes that are prepared for your child in the home kitchen? If you feel abhorrence for such a crime against his body, why will many parents commit it against his soul? Is it, I wonder, simply because they cannot be held legally responsible for the consequences, or because the crime cannot be so easily detected as bodily mal-treatment?

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As a rule the friction with the school is greatest in those homes where there is lack of necessary discipline, and where the obedience question has not been rightly settled. There it is due to a form of jealousy that grudges to the teacher's superior power a victory which parents have not won themselves.

All teachers will have found out that it is easiest to get on with children who have been taught obedience at the right time in the home, and they will find pleasure in it. For their profession can be a delightful one, in spite of its difficulties and hardships, or perhaps because of them.

One thing the school often accomplishes. Many a child who has no sort of discipline at home is at school fairly well fitted for life ; the school, of course, will never lift *you* into the position you ought to have got for yourself, for that is beyond both its intention and power.

But, at any rate, it will foster in the child a certain sense of duty towards you, and influence it to give you, as a voluntary dole, what you were too weak to claim as your right.

Schools are often ignorant of the full extent of their influence. That does not matter. But often they fancy they are only giving instruction when, in reality, they are much rather educating and training. But their principles are all such as tend to support, not to undermine the home. The home, therefore, should do its best for the school.

One other point must be remembered as well. The school is an institution, whose continued improvement has for centuries occupied mankind's best brains, and whose helpful reformation has been due to the efforts of the noblest men.

Every teacher is, often without realising it, the embodiment of these educational efforts ; his own education and training is the result of centuries of work. So there is no touch of accident or chance in any measures put forward by the school in serious earnest.

A perfect school does not exist ; yet in most

schools there has been more striving after perfection than in your efforts to train your children. Your failings, too, cause the teacher unspeakable trouble, so do not be so indignant when you notice his as well.

When, as a little fellow, I used to tell my mother that the schoolmaster had taught me one thing or another, not as she did, she always used to answer : " Then no doubt your teacher is right ; he knows more about such things than I do."

A wise answer, which I always remember with gratitude. I must also confess that, as a pupil, I was for ever at variance with my teachers, and had the reputation of being a refractory fellow. Many children are like that. But, at any rate, such disputes were never due to any home influence.

And between ourselves—no need for your child to hear it—a child often gets much better training from his teachers than from you.

SCHOOL AND OBEDIENCE.

School, too, settles that question of obedience, although differently from the home. Still its method is quite sufficient for school purposes, and the obedience thus achieved we might call school discipline.

And very wholesome it is, especially for children whose parents cannot manage them at home. They get at school a sense of that which was non-existent at home, and consciousness of a superior power, which they are forced to respect. I think, however, I am but voicing the opinion of all teachers when I assert that they would prefer not to have to instil the first ideas of obedience and discipline.

Obedience at school, too, must be quite different from obedience at home, because, in the natural course of his life, the child is already on the way to freedom.

But in addition to this outward obedience there is an inner one, which I should like to see in all children, temporarily at least, and that is the voluntary acknowledgment of the inner superiority of one or other of the teachers.

It is a necessary part of mental development in youth that the child should be brought into contact with people to whom he may look up and improve his own character by his efforts to achieve a like excellence. It is greatly to be desired that the school staff should include men of such natural eminence. To such as these the child voluntarily gives true obedience, that joyous inner submission which is an acknowledgment of the power of truth.

The way is made easier for even this higher obedience if you—his parent—have always inspired the child with feelings of respect and reverence.

If that has proved beyond you, then do not let petty jealousy prevent your child from assuming such an attitude to someone in authority at school.

The ardour and excitability of youth tend, as a rule, to turn these feelings of esteem into a passionate devotion, the first in life.

There is no harm in it ; we have in life to go through many such devotions before we attain to calm and clear self-knowledge. Wise teachers know how best to appraise and keep a check on such feelings ; besides, in the natural course of events, they cannot be of very long duration. As a rule they are eclipsed by others, and die a certain

death when the child has had his first disappointment, and discovered that his idol has feet of clay.

It needs a ripeness of judgment, of which a child is never capable, to esteem and care for those over whose failings we have no delusions. That is why devotion to teachers and school friendships come to such a speedy end. They are, however, as harmless in their demise as in their birth.

The school allows no one to escape a hard inner conflict, and that school is the cause of this conflict makes it doubly necessary that obedience must be an accomplished fact before school-days begin.

Children represent the humanity of the future ; now you cannot fail to notice that since your own school-days men's ideas have undergone a change, and nowhere are we more sensible of this change than in the school.

Older people, as a rule, are anxious to keep quietly to the pace that was set in their youth. I have known numbers of people who never got beyond the ideas they were taught in their own school-days ; it is a difficult matter to stir the inertia of masses.

The school, on the other hand, is a progressive institution under the leadership or influence of enlightened minds. The teaching, therefore, that it gives your child will be essentially different from that which it offered you. Unless you have kept yourself abreast of the times, you will certainly experience a painful sense of conflict and your child even more so.

It is a common fact of universal experience, and one which there is no evading, that each succeeding generation is in direct opposition to the one it

follows, and it is left to the third generation to show some slight appreciation of our mental outlook ; hence the better mutual understanding between grandparents and grandchildren.

Humanity evidently develops by such opposite points of view, and we need not here discuss their causes.

But it is especially in the school that this opposition becomes increasingly apparent, and this makes things difficult, both for parent and child.

The only solution is for the more reasonable of the two to bow to Nature's ruling, and let us hope you will be wise enough to do it. You will make the inevitable difference much easier for your child if you will not deny the worth of the modern point of view and of the modern thought that, through the school, make their way into your home. No one insists that you shall accept them, but neither need you set yourself up in useless opposition.

It is well if children do not perceive at once the inner opposition between school and home ; the later they become aware of it, the more fit will they be by age and mental development to face and deal with its problems.

Neither would children be capable of distinguishing between opinions and persons. Any exception you may take to an opinion would be taken as referring to the teacher's personality, and made the occasion of an argument, in which you would most certainly not come off the conqueror. For in ever greater degree—owing to the influence of friends, teachers, books, and the whole mental atmosphere by which a schoolchild is surrounded—modern thought becomes a force that will estrange him from you in exact proportion to the unbending

obstinacy with which you take your stand on the ideas you have always held.

School and home then, all unconsciously, represent the great life-forces and oppositions which are apparent in development, and to which we might apply the terms : advancement and stand-still. The more successful we are in bringing them into harmony in the personalities of parents and children, the more favourable the conditions for progress ; but this work is beyond the child's powers, and devolves upon you.

To bring up children means continual personal sacrifice and self-denial ; the more willing these offerings on our part, the more delightful our task.

Nature has given us, in our children, a means of testing our inner selves, and our obstinacy and perversity imposes ruthless punishment upon them by creating a discordant atmosphere.

When, however, the task seems too hard for you, take heart and wait in patience for your grandchildren. The bow, that school and children have stretched too tightly, will doubtless be bent back in the same ruthless fashion by the hands of your grandchildren.

So wait in patience, for, after all, patience is the most important lesson we have to learn in this life, and its best teachers are our children.

Thus the obedience demanded and enforced at school is another help in the great aim of all youthful development, viz. freedom. Just because school is but a place of transition, a temporary experience only, its compulsory obedience is of great value in development.

School is not intended—nor is it able—to exercise a permanently compelling or restrictive

influence, but it is meant to provide a prop and support for the child at an important period of its growth, until the young mind finds a firmer support in itself, and learns to tread with steadfast feet through life's wondrous fairyland. And, roughly speaking, the school fulfils its object.

THE CHOICE OF A CALLING IN LIFE.

There are two things in particular accomplished by the school ; in fact, it is in these that its chief value and usefulness lie : It completes obedience, and teaches the child to work.

It receives the child at an age when play is its only work, and substitutes for its games knowledge of use in life. It is not of great importance what subjects the school imparts to the child ; the subject matter may change, and, after all, is to be found in printed books ; but what is of importance is the attitude the child takes up with regard to it. It must be enabled to make what is taught its own.

Everything that is learnt without assimilation is only a burden. Just as a stomach, unable to digest and to convert the food eaten into bodily tissue, is ill, an endless torment, and possibly a cause of death, so everything that lies unchanged in the memory—our mental stomach—tends to death rather than life. That is why there are so many mental corpses, overweighted with undigested knowledge, suffocated with an overplus of learning, and a burden to themselves and others.

In man's mental life all information must undergo a change, and be made part of one's own thought, this mental digestive process we call assimilating what we learn.

To teach this is the work of the school, a work in which it is mainly successful, although there is no denying that some teachers put too much emphasis and too high a value on the amount of instruction given. At any rate, they teach the children to learn, and there is work in that too.

An example will perhaps make things clearer. We all learn to write at school, but not one writes afterwards as he was taught. Now, why not? Because, in the course of life, our handwriting becomes the expression of our own individuality, and the letters assume a form most adapted to this purpose. It is only he who never writes, who, all through life, painfully reproduces the school strokes.

As with writing, so it should be with everything acquired at school.

Discipline and work, then, are what school has to give.

School also leads—without, however, specially aiming at this—to a higher stage of work, viz. the calling in adult life. In elementary schools the choice is generally made during school-days of the child's future work. The children of the country peasant, as a rule, do not need school influence to decide for a similar occupation, but the school has a voice in the child's decision for work as a mechanic, merchant, or professional man.

Your opinion will have some weight with your child, and how you should use it circumstances will teach you better than I can. Only one thing I would beg : pay as much attention as possible to your child's special turn of mind, for life has no greater torment than unsuitable work.

In any case, the choice of a calling continues

the school training in the necessity it imposes of steady work.

The object of all work should be independent practice and successful accomplishment along the lines on which training has been given.

If a child has any artistic gift, let it begin with some suitable handicraft, or under a real master of his art. In every calling we must try to arrange for the child's learning ultimately to excel his master, for every generation should always be a step ahead of the one before.

Whether such progress is achieved or not depends on your child's capacity and diligence. Do not let your own ambition step in ; your part is only to open a way ; the final accomplishment lies beyond your power.

If you both decide for commercial life, see that the first step is such as may ultimately lead to a position of independence ; it will depend on your child himself whether it does so or not. There are enough people in subordinate positions, and so there must always be. But leave life to decide what position your child will reach by his own efforts.

Lastly, if you decide, in accordance with the means and talent at your disposal, on any one of the learned professions, you will soon find its best avenues of approach. But let me implore you not to torment untalented children with book-learning beyond, at most, the standard for exemption from military conscription.¹

The higher a profession, the more does want of ability affect the whole of after-life, because, in such case, many people have to suffer misery from their dependence on inferior characters.

¹ About matriculation standard of British Universities.

It is really much better for your child's prosperity—and that must be the determining factor—for him not to attempt to rise above his powers, but rather only to undertake work in which he can achieve his fullest success.

There is nothing more conducive to the well-being of humanity, as a whole, than to have very many of its members at the work for which they were, as we say, "made." Failure in one's calling only brings misery on oneself as well as on others, and it is doubtless, often, only the result of parental ambition. See, at any rate, that you and your child avoid such an error as this.

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In the choice of a calling, daughters must, of course, have the same consideration as sons. Are they not in every way of as free and worthy birth as our sons or as we ourselves? They are different only, but not inferior; sometimes, indeed, much more gifted.

It is therefore matter for congratulation, that modern opinion has thrown open to women many callings that were closed to them before. How far feminine powers will attain in such callings may safely be left to the future to decide.

In all probability it will be plainly shown that, for certain branches of human activity, the free woman is more adapted than the free man, and the sexes will, quite on their own initiative, set their respective limits. But voluntarily, not under compulsion. So do not hesitate to throw open all professions to women; they will decide on suitable ones themselves.

In any case, the fundamental principle holds

good that daughters, no less than sons, should be trained for callings that will ensure their independence throughout life. Should your daughter decide to renounce her independence for marriage, then leave this decision to her as well. She will not take it without consulting you, provided you have shown yourself strong enough to prove an efficient support in time of need.

But there is one thing you must call to mind. The inner opposition, of which I spoke in the last chapter, will become more and more pronounced in the choice of a calling and its practice.

That does not matter. We are dealing with young human beings, who will learn by experience how to settle their own lives.

Further, we must acknowledge that the higher the calling that your son adopts, the greater his claim to a frank discussion of all modern thought. Even in times such as ours, racked and torn as they are by doubt and dissension, he has a right to a full knowledge of all.

Young people cannot have old heads—a fact to be remembered by all who undertake their training—but, nevertheless, no one is justified in keeping them in ignorance as regards the great questions of the day.

The more freely they are told of all that troubles the modern world, the more successful we shall be in giving them some sure support in their doubts and difficulties.

In proportion as we try to hide all important questions from them, the more they will go their own way in defiant independence, and seek fuller knowledge from counsellors who are, of all, the most undesirable.

Our children must be firmly convinced that we take the keenest interest in their attitude to knowledge, whether this be due to professional necessity or individual taste, and that we have no wish to hide anything from them.

It is but natural that we cannot always share their views, but our very caution, our frankness in calling a halt, will be more of a sure stay and defence to them than we perhaps imagine.

One thing is quite certain. The knowledge belonging to future times must not be withheld from the coming race. Then when that coming generation reaches maturity it will point out to knowledge her new paths, and put right all that leads to pain and wrongdoing.

Here, again, you must remember to take courage and fearlessly go through all with the soul of your child.

VI

THE CHILD AND RELIGION

"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

WHAT IS RELIGION?

WE are drawing near the end now, after many a serious word concerning your child. I have spoken as a father, and fancy I have said little that you have not thought and felt yourself, at any rate nothing remarkable, only facts as taught by experience of life.

We will now conclude with a solemn word together to consecrate our care of the children by bringing it into touch with the very foundation of life.

I do not go to religion for this consecration, but to God. Do not be amazed at such a statement, but give it rather your unprejudiced consideration. Has it never yet struck you, that in the realm of religion you meet with ambiguities and difficulties of every kind?

There is indeed something ambiguous about the very word, religion, itself. We hear it praised as the deepest truth of human nature, as eternal and fundamental. We hear it so extolled that we are filled with longing for this deepest of experiences.

No doubt you, too, have at some time approached

religion with feelings of sacred desire, although you perhaps call yourself to-day an atheist, monist, materialist, or something of the sort. Yet you were not that always, but once looked for divine truth in your religion. Then, suddenly, you saw yourself involved in a network of forms and externals, of doctrines and mysteries, and felt how far removed divine truth was from all these things. Then you despaired of religion and of God, and turned away from both. You did not realise that what is deep and true and spiritual has nothing to do with religion as such.

But now tear yourself away from the ambiguity of the word as generally used, and give the name of religion to all the attempts that have been made in the world to bring into harmony the will of God and a visible united body of human beings.

And to all that men could not put into words and formulæ, because it was above and beyond them, to this something beyond all height and depth, the true and eternal, give the name of God. Let this alone be the object of your search, and if you cannot find it by religion, then try by God Himself ; you and your child together ; you for your child.

In confidence I may tell you that the religion does not exist that is really able to reveal to its followers the nature of God. Had there been one, believe me, the whole world would have taken it by storm. For all flesh longs for the living God.

If you have ever read your Bible attentively, it must have struck you that, in the so-called revelation of the Old Testament, God Himself was at all times very far from His chosen people, and that the few prophets who understood God had

only bitter reproaches upon their lips when they spoke of their nation's religious life.

How it is in Christianity, in its manifold forms you know well enough from our own painful experience. In spite of all Christianity, only one here and there really has God. So that religion and God's indwelling presence are two very different things.

It is well if you see that clearly, for, even if you have managed, in the course of years, to come to some sort of acceptance of your inherited religion, or if you have grown beyond it, your child will still find the question a burning one.

It is characteristic of childhood to ask for truth, and nothing wounds a child more deeply than to discover in parents, teachers, friends, anything wrong or untrue. Nothing hurts a child so much, and nothing shows such lack of refinement as to speak slightly of his parents in his presence. They are for him naturally the embodiment of all truth, sincerity, and purity.

That is why children are so receptive of that sense of the divine which is called, again with painful ambiguity, religion. But the child cries after God, and he is offered a religion, which in its essence has very little to do with God.

Now what will you offer your child? What have you got to offer?

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The relation of man to God is eternal and unchanging. If there is, indeed, a God, He must pervade all nature, and Nature must be the manifestation of His being.

You can, under no circumstances, step aside

from Nature, and if you could you would still carry it with you in your own person. Further, God must be a spirit of love embracing all alike, for everything is a part of Himself.

This alone shows that no religion comprehends God, for all have narrow, petty limits. He embraces all religions and their followers, friends and enemies with equal patience and long-suffering.

It is true man may deny God. And naturally so, for God is too great to be fully realised or understood by human reason, too patient and merciful to take vengeance on those who deny Him. Yet, in your heart, you know that the denial is folly, and even should you have firmly convinced yourself of its truth, your child will teach you the opposite. For all children have a sense of divine truth ; their whole being cries out for truth, for God.

Now, even though you have utterly rejected your religion, or come to see how threadbare and unsatisfying are its few shreds of truth, you are still a long way from the destruction of all your relations with God. Not even though you have not troubled your head about God for many a long year. It would indeed be an impossibility to fall from His encircling arms. A human being may, all through his life, never think of Nature, yet, for all that, he never loses his union with Nature, or, at any rate, his capacity for it. Even so human nature with God.

God's attitude to man never varies, but remains unchanging in its love, pity, and patience. Every human being, at any time, may straightway once more knock, ask, and seek. There is no estrangement, no sin that cannot and will not be pardoned.

The matter is not so simple in religions ; they

indeed find much beyond forgiveness. That is of no consequence, and need not worry you. But with God everything is always simple, true, and plain.

Try now to enter God's presence with your child. For he will demand some answer from you to his questions about God. See you give it before the religions do, but remember you can only give an answer when you have found one yourself.

There is no other than that I have just given. But it makes a great difference whether it comes as a doctrine from your intellect, lacking fire itself and quenching it in your hearer ; or if it gushes from your soul in a life-giving stream. Then, indeed, it forms a bond that binds together your soul and your child's, and both to God.

Only when you come together from out this sanctuary, look and consider how it stands with reference to your chance, inherited religion.

IDEAS OF GOD.

In these considerations concerning the care of the child, the chief emphasis has been everywhere laid on the right settlement of the question of obedience. This has been done because the aim of all education must be freedom, and true freedom is self-discipline.

But the problem of God also finds its solution in this obedience question, for a child's thoughts about God are formed on those about his parents.

The first person a child discovers in this world is his mother ; from knowledge of her he learns to know his father, and when he follows this path farther, he finds God as the supreme power.

The distinctive character and permanence of his feelings to his parents are directly connected with the progress the child makes in obedience, for obedience arises from consciousness of a superior power. If this does not exist, the relationship to his parents will never be a firm one.

In reality, obedience is the expression of the little mortal's natural craving for protection. As we all know, we only feel safe under the protection of power, and only rely on what offers a firm resistance. Thus obedience is only given as the result of absolute confidence.

Hence father and mother stand in the forecourt of the sanctuary. They are the natural way to God, the highest and last protection that the heart of man seeks or needs. You can therefore only enter with your child into that great sanctuary of Nature, which we call God, if you are able to maintain, in your attitude to him, the right position of supreme authority.

Starting from this point of view we can discuss ideas of God.

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No mortal mind can have a real conception of God. All that has been said on this point is most certainly wrong.

God therefore must be an all-embracing personality in Whom all spirits, all beings find scope, understanding, origin. But what is meant exactly by an all-embracing personality? It is a term, nothing more, a term used in default of an adequate conception.

So let us try something else. Just now I made use of the comparison that man could no more get

away from God than he could from Nature. For Nature is of God. Yes, but what is Nature? Again only a term for something completely beyond all human grasp and understanding.

As a rule, we think, when we speak of Nature, of the sum total of all life and existence on this little planet which we, for the time, inhabit. But on second thoughts, we know that meaning to be too limited, so we include the solar system and all the stars that we can see or imagine, as well as those that hang in space, at such a distance that their rays need some thousands of years to reach us.

Well, then, Nature is co-extensive with the whole universe. But our world is most probably only one of many, a mere pigmy perhaps amongst giants. We can have no real mental grasp of our own, much less then of others, hidden, maybe, in the bosom of the Universal. Even if we could, we should be still far from a conception of God, who lives, and works, and reveals Himself in all. And how will you form an idea of such a being, or how can you indeed?

So that way, too, is closed. Now think of yourself, of your ego, picture the one point of your ego as the centre of a corner, and then imagine an infinitely greater ego to which you may give the name of God.

But, after all, do you understand your own ego? Do you know the nature of the inner force that speaks as "I"? These again are only terms signifying nothing.

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These, then, are all wrong roads. There is, however, one way that leads, not indeed to a

conception of God, but yet to an understanding of His nature, a road so plain and simple that everyone—even your own little child—may follow it, yet leading to astounding heights beyond the reach of man's keenest intellect.

You love your child, and your child loves you. See, that is divine. For where love is, there is God also. Where sincerity is, there too is God. All that you surely know. All your being is destined and tuned to love and sincerity.

You know also that you make many mistakes, not least in your attitude to your child. For, indeed, nothing hurts us more than to have to confess to ourselves that we have treated our child amiss. And then, too, you know that in these mistakes there was no expression of the Divine.

Thus you see two pictures of yourself, one as you are, and one as you would wish to be, for each of us has a vision of this last, the ideal hidden in every soul, our share of the Divine.

Think, then, of a perfect mother or a perfect father for your child, and then you will be able to say : that is like God. Your child, too, feels like that.

It follows, then, that the best idea of God that you can form for yourself or offer to your child, one that for both of you will be comprehensible and all-sufficing, is the idea of a father, a mother, or of father and mother both.

A father sees some trouble, and is there with ready help ; he sees faults, and is full of forgiveness ; error, and offers truth ; he is in every way the opposite of what is weak, unlovely, unloving, or false. Such is God.

Put before a human being—young or old—what

is true, right, merciful, and at once it calls forth in him the inner response: "That is like God." The feeling is quite spontaneous, often quite unconscious, yet quite distinct.

We cannot form a mental image of God, yet God's nature is always clear, always within our power of understanding. Your child believes in God so long as he believes in you, for he believes only in the truth that your nature reveals. With you as his starting-point, he gets a childish conception, and understands that God is father or mother, or rather father and mother in one.

Every human being understands the idea of father and mother; it may be that age has a deeper understanding than youth, that the thinker extends the idea farther than the non-thinker, and that the savage differs in his conception from the cultured man; but every one of the millions of human creatures that have been, are, or ever shall be on this earth, holds the idea with a sufficient understanding of its meaning.

So turn the childish thought to the father, something you can both understand. Religions offer many difficulties that can only be conquered by long practice, long study, which too often ends in failure. They speak indeed of God, but by no means always in the voice of God.

Millions have lost their reason through religion, but never one through God. Everyone who finds God finds life, for God is the father of all things living.

But you and your child experience together the love of father and mother; it is, indeed, the delightful world in which you live, so that all humanity grasps and understands it without any

ambiguity. In all sincerity enjoy the sanctity of this your world, and there you will find, enjoy, and understand—God.

Transfer this feeling, if you will, to another personality, to the Spirit that pervades the Universal, to one above all. Your individual idea of the Divine is your own personal support, your crutch, your weakness even, of no consequence in your Father's eyes.

Nor has anyone the right to interfere with your opinion, or pronounce it wrong. You need not even declare your ideas concerning God ; everyone may hold his own.

It is enough if your understanding of His nature is sufficient for yourself. And though you studied through all eternity, your knowledge would only lead you to see the deep mysteries of the Divine, and that the form of your conception was of no unimportance at all.

Thus you can dispense with all religious arguments, and need no single doctrine concerning God. There is really no need of words between you two in this matter, or only, at most, that you should answer his childish questions in a way suited to childish intelligence, as you will best know how. But always accept them seriously, and answer them in all earnestness ; you destroy a sanctuary when you reply to your child's questions with evasions.

Your child's entrance into this world created a vital atmosphere for you both, a plane of existence where you will always find divine truth, a temple filled with the very presence of the Father. If you continue in this truth, you continue in God, and His light shall rest upon you.

You do not know who your child was ; you will

never know. Neither do you know who you are, nor who God is. But you will learn to understand all that as you experience it ; you will never be able, perhaps, to clothe it in words, but a clear understanding will be yours.

It is a blessed time of experience that reveals the nature of father, mother, child, and God. It is worth your while to sacrifice all for your child's soul, for such sacrifices bring an all-surpassing gain.

RELIGION AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION.

Up till now, we have only talked as ordinary people ; that really should be amply sufficient, for then we stand on a natural footing which, after all, is the chief thing.

Perhaps, however, you are a religious man. By a religious man I mean such a one as conforms very seriously both in outward forms and in his inner life to the special teachings of his religion, and is fully convinced of their truth.

As a general rule this is true of the minority only of the professors of any special form of religion. But such people will impress their religious life upon their entire household. The children naturally grow up in it, and adopt the religion of their home, just as they do its other customs, and that, moreover, very zealously and in good earnest.

In such case as this, however, never forget your natural attitude to God, which is higher than all your forms of religion, and see that these are lifted to a higher plane by that realisation of the Divine, which you have, and which you especially can so easily have. Or else it will be no difficult matter

for your children to develop a fanatical turn of mind, which is quite likely to be followed by a sudden revulsion.

It is especially the children of ultra-religious homes who, later on, are in continual danger of turning right round and utterly losing their religion. The younger generation is indeed always inclined to dissent from the views of the one preceding it.

Yet your children would not lose God, if they had understood His nature through you, but since in your home everything was subordinated to forms of religion, they lost—when they rejected the excess of religion—their belief in God as well. That is to-day the fate of very many, and it will be no easy matter to save divine truth from the shipwreck of religion.

But perhaps you are not very religious, and drift along with the majority. Here, then, see that you rely with your child on the one truth of God, and leave religious doctrines to those with a vocation for it. It is impossible for you to teach your child any religion that is not deeply rooted in your own heart.

So that should you be without religion, do not awaken any false ideas in your child's mind. They would soon give way to a painful sense of a lack of sincerity on your part. We cannot be too straightforward with children, for there is nothing they find so hard to forgive as insincerity. Forgiveness of any fault indeed presupposes a great maturity of character, which youth, as a rule, does not yet possess.

If, therefore, you conduct your home-life without any special religious trend, do the same with your

child. You both have something higher to which you can go for help.

Religion can only be of use in training in those homes where its dictates are followed scrupulously, and from the heart. And even there it should be used with caution, for fear lest it give rise to a sudden revulsion of feeling.

Religion's real place is the School, and there it takes an important position, for the School utilises religion as a means of education. And quite naturally so, for, in earlier times, the school was dependent on the Church ; indeed, the school had, as a matter of fact, been founded by the Church for no other purpose than to propagate an understanding of religion.

The Protestant Church founded the School simply because it wished to preach, and its preaching must remain incomprehensible until certain existing religious ideas had been extirpated.

The other Churches have now gradually, more or less, accepted the School, although they regard it somewhat suspiciously, on account of its special religious bent.

Such an origin amply explains why the School looked upon religion as a chief factor in education.

And even to-day, when the School is more under State control, religion still plays an important part in it, for now the State also makes use of religion as a means of education ; indeed, it is the State, above all, that feels religion is something as yet indispensable.

Hence, in any case, your child will come under the influence of religious training whether you wish it or not. Consequently it is not so important that your home-training should have a definitely

religious trend ; indeed, such a trend would certainly be harmful, unless it were the expression of your real home-life.

* * * * *

So far we have only spoken of religion in general, not of any special form, nor does that lie within the scope of this book. We are really simply speaking of you and your child, and can only treat of other things in so far as they affect your mutual relationship.

Yet should you say you belong to the Christian religion, I am forced to ask to which special sect, for, as everyone knows, they do not acknowledge one another's truth.

But that is all of utter insignificance in God's sight, for not a single one is the full expression of His true nature and majesty. You can find in the natural human relationship between you and your child more truth than in all these religious forms.

Of course, though, you have been born into some form of religion, and it will naturally follow that your child should go to a school that teaches those distinctive doctrines. Generally speaking, it is inadvisable to change one's religion, for we come no nearer to God in one form than in another. Yet if anyone should feel compelled to make a change, then let him act as his mind and conscience dictate ; no one has a right to interfere in this matter unasked.

As regards the use and teaching in the School of any special doctrines, that is a point you must leave to those in whose hands it lies. For here, too, the School makes use of well-considered

methods, with which no outsider can profitably interfere.

Render to the School the things that are the School's, and to God the things that are God's; the more patiently you submit on your child's account to things you cannot alter, the easier do you make them for the child himself.

Earlier times worked themselves up to a terrible state of excitement over such questions, with the result that the air was always more or less full of religious strife, a very unedifying and unnecessary state of things, for there can never be any touch of the divine in religious dissension.

It is often, too, a matter for regret that the School frequently makes children thoroughly dislike religion. This everlasting repetition of Bible narratives, with fresh explanation and expounding, is especially trying, a trial under which the child sighs, and you with him.

Hence it is not always advisable for the home to introduce these Bible tales, although the natural thing would be for every mother to tell them to her children. Children like hearing, and readily understand them, especially from their mother's lips. But when the same thing is to come in the School over and over again, one scarcely knows whether to advise such a beginning at home. For it is children's nature to notice what they have once heard with appreciation, but if it is for ever forced upon them, they get at last to detest it.

Then console your child with the fact that this too will come to an end some day, and do not increase his repulsion by your own indignation, however well justified. Such consolation is, how-

ever, not exactly a support for the Scripture narratives, rather the surest way to ensure the tossing aside of the Bible when school-life is ended, unfortunately a feature of everyday occurrence at the present day.

Still, man can live without the Bible even ; God was before the Bible, and will continue to be after it no less.

In any case, it must be in you that your child may take refuge from all religions, and in you that he may get a realisation of God. All cannot find in religion a way of access to the Father, but in you your child can, provided (and this should be your first care) that you have found it first yourself.

If this is so, you may calmly allow your child to go through all the doctrines prescribed by your religious sect. After all, so very much is not required.

To many people their Church and its ceremonies offer almost their only opportunity of rising above the world of every day. Perhaps you can really offer your child nothing of divine truth and realisation ; then your only resource is some religious organisation, or you will sink into a slough of materialism, which must ultimately be a source of torture to you.

Even if you feel that the Churches themselves have, at their disposal, but very little life-giving divine truth, there is, after all, nothing to be gained by leaving them. Where else can one go? Into utter desolation amongst the Philistine ranks. There may be enough of this within religion's boundaries, but there is still more outside. Or shall we join another religious sect? To what

purpose then? Not one is a divine institution.¹ Hence everywhere there is lacking exactly what you seek.

Moreover, to leave the Churches entirely is to make this religious question one of the greatest moment. If it were a question of God, this would be a matter for joy. But it is only a question of religion, not worthy of so much attention, or to be made the subject of opposition and all kinds of bitter party feeling.

No, rather render to religious sects the things which are theirs, and to God the things which are God's.

The child, in riper years, will take up the attitude most in accord with his convictions, nor is it within your rights to interfere in any way with his choice.

Many people are unhappy if their children develop religious opinions differing from their own. But unjustly so. Mature years should bring to children as completely free spirits so much liberty of self-determination as to permit them to decide on their personal attitude to the various forms of religion. How can their decision, then, ever cause bitterness and estrangement between you?

If the outward religious form was the only bond of union between you, then, of course, a change in your child's attitude would be likely to cause pain; but if you are both seeking the way to the Father, your religious difference sinks into complete insignificance.

God's attitude to man is eternal and unchanging—only religions change with the times—but if you

¹ Cf. with this the detailed treatment in Lhotzky's *Religion or the Kingdom of God—A Tale*.

and your child have found one another in the Eternal, you stand above the changing times, and can calmly ignore all religious difficulties and trials.

TRUE FELLOWSHIP.

It is not the object of this little book to speak about religious matters as a whole. It is only concerned with one question, viz. you and the soul of your child. Now it is your turn to ask : what is the attitude to your inherited religion which you should hand on to your child?

To which I answer : Bear with it as long as God thinks well to do so. Some day there will come a time when mankind will outgrow its religion. But it may very well be that we shall not live to see this time, when all shall be in touch with divine truth. Yet it is possible for you to find true fellowship between yourself and your child in God, a fellowship which, even to-day, stands above every religious community.

In religious circles it is generally said that forms, ceremonies, and doctrines are requisite because no human religious fellowship can be imagined without these visible bonds. That, however, is but a half-truth. History undeniably proves that all forms of religion have worked by forming communities. But all only affected a very limited number of people ; to all outside their narrow circle they assumed an attitude of hostile denunciation.

Different religions—and not least the numerous forms of the Christian religion—have been the cause of endless wars, which still continue, although waged to-day not by military force of arms but

by newspaper articles and mental opposition. The history of all religions is written in blood, and their gloomy path marked by martyred heaps of dead.

Nature and God have no part in such a state of things as this. All men are equal in God's eyes, and the same love, the same saving help embraces all, now and for ever.

But you may certainly belong to a definite religion, and do so without the slightest twinge of conscience, for you see God's infinite forbearance with them all. Only make no parade of your religion before God ; it represents but *a* truth ; God Himself is *the* Truth.

And one thing remember. The particular relationship existing by the law of Nature between you and your child gives you both the possibility of a higher religious fellowship between yourselves than any the world can offer. Between and over you lies divine truth, which would fain develop into true fellowship of all men.

You and your child are two independent, and different, free spirits ordained, without your control, to give each other mutual help and assistance. Hence there is no question that your mutual attitude represents the true relationship between all men and God. Nature has given you an object lesson in facts, and with it the possibility of finding a religious fellowship which stands above all the chances and changes of this mortal life. For you and your child, purely by the working of Nature, stand in divine relationship to each other.

The inheritance that has thus, without your control, fallen to your lot must, of course, be

grasped and won before it can become your possession and source of power.

Such conquest lays upon you especially a task of serious self-denial, a task that has to do with mind no less than body.

* * * * *

The bodily task you assumed joyfully enough. From your child's first moment you bore with all goodwill every inconvenience and sacrifice demanded by the little new-comer. You gave up to your child—with a sigh, perhaps, but yet gladly—nay, even almost with delight—the day's labour, the night's rest, and fulfilled all his commands issued with the utter ruthlessness of an imperious autocrat.

That was divine work. You proved for yourself the truth of Christ's words, that whosoever received such a little child in His name, received Him, for this sacrifice became a lifelong source of unending joy and refreshment.

We must perform the same service for our child's soul, and so bring our work to completion. Just as we tended its body, giving the guidance and restraint, its increase in understanding required, so we must always keep a watchful eye on all the stirrings of its soul, letting nothing escape our notice, yet having pardon ready for all.

True training consists of seeing and forgiving. Forgiveness means not indeed making light of the wrong, but taking one's stand far above it. Forgiveness is truth without limits.

He who can restrain only, practises but the negative half of truth, but he who pardons adds the positive half that is not blinded by evil, wrong-

doing, or weakness, but shows the courage to believe in spite of all in the child's innate truth and goodness.

Your child should recognise, as an utterly impregnable truth of his life, that there can never be anything beyond your power of forgiveness. This truth he should learn by no words, but only by your life itself.

If, with regard to this point, your child shows mistrust, and hides his inner self from you, first ask yourself whether the fault is not yours, whether there are not still some things that have the power so to enrage you that they simply do not dare to tell you of them.

The one way to restore confidence is to have perfect truth between you and your child, and to let him see that neither do you wish to conceal anything from him. As we have already said, a great help to this would be the explanation of the secret of sex, which therefore you must not leave to another, whether comrade, teacher, or doctor.

Nor is it less important for you to speak quite openly to your child concerning your religious belief or unbelief. There should be no secrecy between you on this important question in life from about the child's fifteenth year. The exact time in your child's particular case you must decide yourself, since there is such variety in the development of children.

Whether you believe in God or not, profess a religious creed or none, in any case you stand by the force of your sincerity to your child in divine fellowship with him, and have raised your natural relationship to a spiritual one. Upon this absolute

sincerity your true inward fellowship has its firm foundations.

You will then easily be strong enough to bear all your child's religious progress. For school, education, knowledge, are all quite likely to confirm or contradict—often in swift alternation—the father's religious belief. Yet all this will in no way affect the true fellowship between you. You never need hide your thoughts in these matters, but you will be able to bear all the views that your child pours out to you.

Thus you stand above every religious relationship, and therefore never need any discussion over religious questions. Up till now all different religions have been the source of more strife than of true fellowship. You and your child, however, are raised above the battle.

And so you reach the point where Jesus took His stand. It was not for nothing He called Himself the Son of Man, for this name signifies a definite position within the life given by Nature. Thus He took his stand entirely on Nature, for Nature is of God.

It is extraordinarily significant that not one of the many Christian Churches can really lay sole claim to Christ in His full perfection. He is as high above them as God Himself, above all the religions of the earth.

He had, therefore, no single doctrine, nor formula, nor ceremony, which He imposed upon His followers. All such it is left to the Christian Churches to profess. Christ Himself looks at these things from afar.

Not even the Lord's Prayer has the significance of a formula ; this is a misuse of the prayer. It

is simply to show the direction in which the wishes we put before God should lie. If it had even been meant as an indispensable formula, Jesus would have seen the necessity of writing it down Himself. But He never wrote anything, for it was not His wish to create formulas, confession of faith, sacred letters.

The truth He brought to us was that God is the Father of all men, and that everyone—without exception or distinction—has the right to approach God without ceremonies or hesitation : Our Father in Heaven.

This was not taught by Jesus as doctrine, but all who came into touch with Him felt it as truth. It was always said : " The people glorified God," for in Jesus they learnt and knew the greatness, the power, and mercy of God.

Wherever there are men who show the divine nature, there are the disciples of Jesus. He never could—nor indeed would He purpose otherwise than that God's work, the redemption of man, should be carried on in any other way. Christ, God Himself, was always to be made flesh, always to be felt and seen in men. Only thus would men be able to understand the truth.

There is no other way, and you and your child have been placed by Nature on this way ; all you have to do is to follow it, and you follow Christ, no matter what form of religion you profess.

It is not told us what our conception of the Divine should be. The spirit of the Father pervades the All, and everything finds its truth in the relationship with Him. This is all sufficient.

. Your relationship to your child extended to embrace all men is then what we find in Christ.

In accord with their true nature, then, all men are bound to each other by the ties of brotherhood, and the one and only truth is that we should treat everyone as a human being, and therefore as having an undisputed share in the divine Spirit of fatherhood that penetrates all creation.

As soon as you stand on this footing with your child, you stand on the ground of true communion between God and man, on the ground of Nature, Christ, and Truth.

You have Christ, and hear His voice, for you are of the Truth.

It is worth fighting for, worth every effort we can make, for there is no other way to the Father, no other truth, no other life.

CHILDREN AS TEACHERS.

It is most certain that the real teachers of divine truth are not parents, but children. It was indeed with justice that Christ held them up to men as their teachers when He said: "Unless ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Thus from the moment they enter our life, children begin their work of silent teaching.

That we do not hold a monopoly of teaching, but share it with our children, is the natural confirmation of the statement that children are born free spirits on an equality with us, a confirmation given by one no less than Christ Himself.

To see its truth we need only notice people before they have children and after. The change is often so great that they can barely be

recognised; not only is their appearance altered, but their whole nature, their mental outlook. Their appearance is the sign of inward character:

Think of the following state of things existing in many homes, but not in yours we will hope.

A child never comes to his father without assuming a special look and demeanour, and only addresses him in certain set forms of speech, which he has been taught by servants.

Would that give you great satisfaction? Rather, I hope, such behaviour would make you furious. Yet this is what God has to accept from men. For when they approach Him, they put on a veneer of quite extraordinary solemnity, and speak only in set phrases learnt beforehand. Now and again they even wonder that this performance—prayer, they call it—is of no avail. They ought to be glad that a thunderbolt doesn't put it to an untimely end.

Something, then, we can learn from children—their frank trustfulness. Most attractive of all they are when, in all honest simplicity, they pour out to us their innermost heart with all its charm, all its failings; when they feel nothing such a matter-of-course as their parent's presence.

They themselves, of course, have no idea of their charm at such times, even though they are revealing all their frailties; but there is nothing so hard as to refuse anything to such fearless trust as theirs.

Doubtless it is the same in heaven. After all, we are human beings, that is, spirits whose most precious possession is a feeling for the Father. There is no Kingdom of Heaven, no communion with God, without this fearless trust, that in all

simplicity lays bare every weakness, failing, sin, no less than love and confidence.

Strive, then, to be natural and full of this fearless trust, and afterwards we can talk of the efficacy of prayer and similar subjects.

Most certainly there is no Kingdom of God to be found where a parade is made of solemn faces and gestures, or of anything else contrary to our nature. Learn that from your children.

Hence we may draw a warning not to be all too zealous in our teaching. It is true we train our children for this world, but the children train us for the Kingdom of God.

Yet it was never said by Christ—nor indeed by anyone—Unless ye become as your parents, ye shall never make the most of this world. (Probably, too, it is not a fact. In any case, the teaching given by the children is of more importance.

How then do children accomplish this work for the Kingdom of God? Evidently all unconsciously, for they come to the world strangely ill-equipped, with their total absence of all principles.

Principles are superfluous for the Kingdom of God ; perhaps even a drawback.

* * * * *

The first point is the child's open-hearted trustfulness. Evidently in God's sight a frank and trusting heart is a man's best possession. Be yourself at all times, everywhere, whether in the presence of men or of God, above all before God, for there you will find understanding, even though men may possibly deny it to you.

* * * * *

Learn one thing more as well. It is not only when with us, but with all the world, that children are quite natural and unaffected. Hence they can always make their way, even where it is closed for their elders.

It is this simple directness of theirs that conquers all hearts. We all unhesitatingly accept a child as friend without introductions or formalities, and everyone feels he has the right to speak without hesitation to any child, and to show plainly his pleasure in and liking for him. Many a cruel enmity on this earth has been ended by a child's hand, and many a misanthropist owes his conversion to a little child.

How does this come about? Because children have no mental reservations, but are frank, simple, transparent, and hence are much nearer true human nature than are adults.

Thus children possess the simple honesty and truth that is necessary to draw men into fellowship.

For what is human fellowship, true humanity, but—the Kingdom of God? It is this Kingdom in a visible form, the rule of truth on earth—call it what you will—that finds expression when peaceful unity comes into all human relations.

It is not the cunning, the deceitful, the sly, not the violent and boastful who shall one day conquer the earth, but those who keep their child's nature and hearts filled with peace and kindliness.

Even to-day this is felt by everyone, only so few have courage to pass, with the child's attitude, through all life's phases. Yet if they had, they would get much farther than by all their tortuous ways.

"Children therefore are our real teachers; in

them we catch sight of man's real nature without the need of books to help. Indeed, you will find no help in them, but without any words or explanations you can see it in utmost simplicity shown in your own child's heart.

In the child-world we find a morsel of true humanity, a tiny scrap of paradise ever present on earth, not in spirit only, but embodied in flesh, just as we need it.

It is not, as a rule, very long-lived. Our "education" manages in a wonderfully short time to cast a shade over this ray of sunshine, and to inculcate in children the attitude and demeanour that so disfigures adults.

Yet, for all that, it was once there. You only need to recognise this child-sense as superior to life's nonsense, and you will catch a glimpse of the meaning of the Kingdom of God or unspoiled Nature; *for, indeed, they are much the same.*

This then is the child as teacher—a triumphant bearer of joy.

* * * * *

In conclusion, there is still something more to be learnt from them. That you have learnt consideration and patience, joy in sacrifice, and sympathy with the weak, you owe almost entirely to your child. But there is still one more point to which I would especially call your attention.

It is strange what a remarkably open mind children have for all the deeper questions of life. They are often very late in acquiring any sense of earning money or of riches, although, of course, this depends greatly on their environment. But for serious things, for God, they often show such

an enquiring mind as may embarrass many a parent.

Then what answers they often get, such as we, in our haste and embarrassment, are wont to offer children, evasions rather than answers.

But even these they accept in all good faith, ponder these evasions, and ask again and again, so that it is plain the little mind has been silently working away at the problem much more earnestly than we imagined.

This open mind for things that matter, this indifference for those of no importance, a mind that soars above the ordinary, the everyday is something else you could learn from your child. If not from him, then where?

Many a man has thought his views on time and eternity were unalterably fixed, and has comfortably settled down as an indescribably shallow and self-satisfied Philistine. Then his child came, and with hungry eyes asked question after question, until his dissatisfaction with the evasions produced, for the first time, the growth of something like serious thought in the degenerate human mind.

As long as children exist in the world the search after God will continue. Religions and Churches could be abolished, but God would remain ever the same.

Christ said the same of the Temple in Jerusalem, in His time a hoary sanctuary of many centuries. But should we do away with children, then indeed the search after God would cease.

But we shall not do away with them. God in Nature has provided against that. But learn from your child—if you have already forgotten—to think once more of God, and to seek after Him. Ask

as frankly and eagerly as even your child ; take the matter in full earnest.

Then you will have in your home a little piece of the Kingdom of God, of human fellowship, of mutual love, and of search for eternal truth.

Whilst, outside its walls, scholars rack their brains and write mighty tomes over the conception of the Kingdom of God ; whilst the world disputes as to whether there is, or could be, any Kingdom of God at all, you have it at home ; see and enjoy it in

THE SOUL OF YOUR CHILD

EPILOGUE

IT is but right that the last word should belong to you, dear mothers, to whom the whole has been dedicated. You, my own dear Mother, let me grow and never tried to educate me. Your love followed me on all life's devious ways, even though it must have found some hard to tread. I never remember a word of reproach upon your lips ; may my inmost gratitude for this fall like a golden rain across the evening of your days.

And you, my dear wife, have brought up, in like manner, our children, because you, too, were given freedom of growth.

I know my readers will look with doubt on much contained in this little book. But your life bears witness that it is possible to let others follow their own line of growth, and that what we say is really fact.

Your grandchildren, dear Mother, grow up as you in silence taught me. They are all utterly different, and will follow utterly different paths, each in accordance with his own natural bent. Not one of us all, perhaps, will ever be accounted amongst the great ones of the earth. •That, indeed, is unnecessary, and seldom to be desired. But this one thing men must know, that each and all of us are to be found in the ranks of the free.



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